





THE
RELIGIOUS DOUBTS
OF DEMOCRACY

EDITED BY

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AUTHOR OF "NO ROOM TO LIVE," "BRITAIN'S HOMES,"
"TO-DAY'S WORK"

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIALISM :	
I. CHRIST AND OUR NEIGHBOURS	2
GEORGE HAW.	
II. WHY I RETURNED TO CHRISTIANITY	8
GEORGE LANSBURY, former Socialist Parliamentary Candidate for Walworth and Bow and Bromley.	
III. THE FAITH OF A SOCIALIST WORKING MAN	10
TOM ADAMS (an East London Railway man).	
IV. THE SERVICE OF MAN	12
REV. CHARLES L. MARSON, Fabian Society.	
II. CHRISTIANITY AND RATIONALISM	17
G. K. CHESTERTON, Author of <i>Robert Browning</i> .	
III. CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE	22
REV. J. CARTMEL-ROBINSON, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Hoxton.	
IV. CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIONS :	
I. THE IDEA OF GOD AND PRIMITIVE RELIGIONS	28
PROFESSOR J. H. MOULTON, M.A., D.Lit., Didsbury College, Manchester.	
II. BUDDHISM AND MODERN HUMANISM	34
DR. W. ST. CLAIR TISDALL, Author of <i>The Sevenfold Path</i> .	
V. CHRISTIANITY AND HISTORY	39
REV. R. MARTIN POPE, M.A., Minister of Banbury Wesleyan Church.	
VI. CHRISTIANITY AND ATHEISM	43
PERCY REDFERN, Manchester.	

	PAGE
VII. ON LEARNING TO BELIEVE :	
I. THE ROAD TO FAITH	52
GEORGE W. E. RUSSELL, Author of <i>Matthew Arnold</i> .	
II. THE GROWTH OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF	55
DR. T. C. FRY, Headmaster of Berkhamsted.	
III. WHY I BELIEVE IN CHRISTIANITY	61
X G. K. CHESTERTON.	
IV. POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS OF FAITH AND PRAYER	64
GEORGE HAW.	
VIII. IN DEFENCE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT	72
PROFESSOR W. H. BENNETT, D.D., Lit.D., Hampstead College.	
IX. HAVE THE GOSPELS BEEN TAMPERED WITH?	78
REV. W. C. ALLEN, Sub-Rector of Exeter College, Oxford.	
X. CHRIST'S MIRACLES :	
I. REVELATION AND MIRACLES	83
MARGARET BENSON, Author of <i>Capital, Labour, a Trade and the Outlook</i> .	
II. MIRACLES AND MODERN CIVILISATION	87
X G. K. CHESTERTON.	
XI. THE EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION	90
HON. AND REV. J. G. ADDERLEY, Christian Social Union.	
XII. CAN MAN SIN AGAINST GOD?	
I. DETERMINISM	102
REV. F. R. TENNANT, Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge.	
II. THE ETERNAL HEROISM OF THE SLUMS	106
X G. K. CHESTERTON.	
III. MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN ACTS	110
REV. CHARLES L. MARSON.	
IV. THE WAY OUT FOR ALL	114
GEORGE HAW.	

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIALISM

- I.—CHRIST AND OUR NEIGHBOURS *George Haw*
II.—WHY I RETURNED TO CHRISTIANITY *George Lansbury*
III.—THE FAITH OF A SOCIALIST WORKING MAN *Tom Adams*
IV.—THE SERVICE OF MAN *Rev. Charles L. Marson*

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIALISM

I.—CHRIST AND OUR NEIGHBOURS

TO-DAY, Christians, adherents of the most successful people's movement known to history, have to face the fact that the leaders of the newest people's movement—Socialism—are nearly all against them.

For this state of things Christians are as much to blame as Socialists.

The leaders of Socialism are carrying the working classes of every country with them, not in their economic teaching alone, but to a very large extent in their opposition to Christianity.

Workpeople, the first to heed Christianity, the first to teach it, the first to strive and suffer for it, are everywhere being led away from the movement they made.

"Christianity," says Bebel, "the prevailing spiritual expression of the present economic order, must pass away as a better social order arrives."

Liebknecht maintains that Socialism sets itself against Christianity because "Christianity is the religion of private property and of the respectable classes."

"The first words of religion," Friedrich Engels declares, "is a lie."

"The idea of God," says Karl Marx, "must be destroyed."

That is clear enough as to the attitude of the founders and leaders of Social Democracy on the Continent. The same anti-Christian tendency has been shown by men who have tried to build up a Social Democratic Party in England. Mr. Belfort Bax says of Socialism: "It utterly despises 'the other world,' with all its stage properties—that is, the present objects of religion."

Yet we know that this kind of Socialism made no headway in England. Social Democracy was stagnant while a body of Christian Socialists grew up among us. These people had been influenced by Kingsley and Maurice in the Church of England, and by the great missions, with their large social aims, founded in recent years by the Nonconformist Churches.

But as a mere materialistic movement, Socialism made little, if any, progress in our midst. The several organisations formed with the object of creating a Socialist Party in England after the pattern of the large and powerful Socialist Parties in France and Germany have all been failures. It was matter for wonder to men like William Morris that England, the home of co-operation and the Labour movement, cared so little for Socialism.

Socialism in this country was without a prophet among the people until Mr. Blatchford appeared. His "Merrie England" burst upon them as a revelation. No book of to-day has influenced Democracy more. It sold by the million. Here was something the people could understand. Here was Socialism that was not irreligious, whatever else it might be. There was a distinctly Christian note in that and many of Mr. Blatchford's subsequent books. For years the Socialism that has been identified with the *Clarion* and its editor has steadily grown in this country.

Now in his last work, *God and My Neighbour*, Mr. Blatchford has joined with Bebel and Liebknecht and Engels

and Marx in denouncing the Christian religion. "Christianity," says Mr. Blatchford, "is a fabric of impossibilities erected upon a foundation of error."

Again, "I am working for Socialism," says Mr. Blatchford, "when I am attacking a religion that is hindering Socialism."

Now we who are Christian Socialists—and observe the word Christian comes first—put all this denunciation of Christianity down to misapprehension, for much of which the churches must share the blame.

In the face of all these utterances from Socialist leaders we still say with Mazzini that "The instinctive philosophy of the people is faith in God."

We believe that the greatest number of social reforms have taken their rise in Christianity. We believe that the Labour Movement in this country owes more to Christianity than to Socialism. The Labour Movement was here before Socialism was heard of. The trade unions, the co-operative societies, the friendly societies, have been led for the most part by avowedly Christian men, and these three great people's movements growing up side by side have raised the condition of our working classes infinitely higher than Social Democracy has raised the condition of the working classes of any other country.

Whatever may be said of the Labour Movement here, it certainly cannot be described as an anti-Christian movement. It has not, like Social Democracy, turned from its own objects to denounce Christianity. Rather it has found its best inspiration in Christianity, and its best leaders in Christian men.

I am personally acquainted with most of the Labour Members of Parliament. Not one of them opposes Christianity. Most of them are avowedly Christian men, several closely identified with the churches.

Agnosticism may be growing among

our working people to-day, but we believe it to be but a passing influence. We still hold with Carlyle that, "The Practical Labour of England is *not* a chimerical triviality: it is a Fact, acknowledged by all the Worlds; which no man and no demon will contradict. It is, very audibly, though very inarticulately as yet, the one God's Voice we have heard in these two atheistic centuries. . . . Labour must become a seeing rational giant, with a *soul* in the body of him, and take his place on the throne of things."

And if Labour is being led away to-day from the Christian religion by so many of the Socialist leaders, we believe it is because of the error and misconception into which those leaders and their followers have fallen regarding the essentials of Christianity.

That, too, is not to be wondered at. If they judge Christianity by the great mass of Church-goers to-day, can you wonder at their distrust and indifference? Many working men and working women have written to me to say that while they are anti-Church they are not anti-Christian. Others say they have come out from Church membership, given up Sunday School classes, ceased to sing in choirs, because they feel the Church is not the friend of the people, and is teaching what is not true. Others go further and declare there is no place for religion in the working man's programme.

Mr. Blatchford has but given expression to what a large part of our present-day Democracy is saying and thinking. In *God and My Neighbour* he says: "Christ's message, as we have it in the Gospels, is neither clear nor sufficing, and has been obscured, and at times almost obliterated, by the pomps and casuistries of the schools and Churches."

With the latter part of this statement I cordially agree; with the former I disagree.

Further, Mr. Blatchford suggests

"that the teachings of Christ were imperfect and inadequate."

Let us see. Forget the churches and turn to the words and life of Christ Himself, and you will find that some of the religious difficulties of Democracy disappear, and many of the misconceptions stand out in clear light.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.

There is certainly no ambiguity about that. Christ is the one great teacher who practised what He preached; He laid down His life for His friends—as well as for His enemies. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." What did He command?

The first of all the commandments is . . . Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. . . . And the second is, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

You could not have anything clearer or more simple than that. The pomps and casuistries of the schools and the churches may have obscured the teaching, but the meaning of Christ's own words is unmistakable.

Christ's message is to all men and to all movements. Therefore Christ has a message to Labour and to Socialism. Having been a Labour man Himself and a leader of Labour men, His message is the most exalted that has ever been addressed to Labour, always simple, always sympathetic.

There is, I know, something seemingly more attractive to high-souled people, in whose ears for ever sounds the sad still music of humanity, in making the service of man the first principle of their religion instead of the service of God. That is what Mr. Blatchford does, and the great body of secular Socialists.

We say, in reply, that the most enduring service of man is found in the service of God. The greatest servants of man have been servants of God. To mention but a few commonplace names of comparatively recent times: Father Damien, John Wesley, Charles Kingsley, Elizabeth Fry, John Howard, Wilberforce, Lord Shaftesbury, Florence Nightingale, General Gordon, Dickens, Victor Hugo, and Mrs. Booth.

Most people find it impossible to serve mankind long without despair. Because of the weakness of human nature, that despair forces many people to retire from the service. Sometimes a great leader keeps together a large following, and wins many recruits; but when the leader goes, the cause always suffers, the ranks are always thinned by desertions. Only those who are strong in heart, and mind, and purpose endure to the end. But a movement that only retains the intellectually strong can never be a people's movement. An abiding cause is one that can stand the weaknesses, the follies, the inconsistencies of human nature. Of Christianity, as of no other people's movement, it can be said: "Our Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." It has committed itself to the selfishness and renunciation, the civilisations and the savageries of man. The Word became humanity, and overcame humanity.

Have you ever tried to find out the cause of man's despair in other movements? Have you thought why so many movements which aim at the brotherhood of man come to naught? Movements that put the service of man first can never be anything else but of the nature of man, weak and erring.

Something higher than a gospel of the brotherhood of man is needed in order to redeem man. Think you this is a new gospel—this of the brotherhood of man? Peoples and nations have committed themselves to this religion from time immemorial, and the result is always the same all the world

over all the ages through : the religion that is of man produces the evils that are of man. You cannot gather grapes of thorns.

In the eighteenth century the "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" of the French Revolution produced the horrors of the guillotine ; in the nineteenth century the brotherhood of man as taught by the descendants of the Buddhists in India helped to produce the infamies and cruelties of the Mutiny ; in this so-called enlightened twentieth century, which Mr. Blatchford tells us has got rid of the devil, the "all-men-are-born-free-and-equal" of the Democratic American Constitution lynches black men, and tortures them until the victims have been heard to cry out, "Please, Mr. White Man, shoot me, shoot me!" When, too, in the ages that the Church has been powerful in the things of this world, and has arrogated to itself powers that belong to God, and substituted human law for divine teaching, you have had the evils of man over again, with all man's cruelty and bigotry and savagery.

Mr. Blatchford has based many of his arguments against Christianity on the vile and horrible persecutions carried out by the Church. He has blamed Christianity for the infamies of the Church, made inhuman by man. He does not seem to have seen that the Christianity of persecution days is seen, not in the Church—which, as an institution of man, is liable to man's errors—but in the people persecuted.

Whom did the Church persecute? For the most part, Christians. In much the same way, another Church of man persecuted Christ Himself.

Often enough, the very persecutions of the Church, instead of being an argument against, are an argument for Christianity. They show how for Christ's sake men and women and children were not afraid to defy the Church in the days of its greatest power, nor afraid to face torture and the stake,

In one of his *Clarion* articles Mr. Blatchford told of the disgust he felt at seeing in an art gallery a picture of a maiden being led by a crowd of monks to her death. I think Mr. Blatchford called the monks unholy savages. They were unholy savages, in the sense that some of the French Revolutionists, and some of the Hindus, and some of the cultured American Democrats have been unholy savages. But what of the maiden? She stands in the picture for Christianity. The monks only stand for man's inhumanity. She was giving her life for her faith. Where is the maiden or the man who has gone to the stake for Socialism?

Nothing gives so much courage to halting men and timid maidens as Christianity. Thousands of Christians who were persecuted by the Pagans, and thousands more who were persecuted later by the Church, could have saved themselves by a word ; but that word meant the renunciation of their faith, and they refused to utter it.

Surely there is something marvelous in this fact alone. What is this wonderful thing that gives to maidens a courage greater than that born of the battlefield in valiant soldiers? It is a power that is not of man : a power that comes from the Heavenly Father.

And it is just this Fatherhood of the Christian religion that makes it triumph over all religions that are merely religions of humanity, rendering it more abiding, making its followers better servants of mankind than those who profess a religion which aims solely at the service of man. Christianity owns, as a first principle, that before man can change others, he must first change himself. This is a change not to be wrought by man, but by God. It is a change that is wrought in all who observe the two commandments which Christ said were greater than all others, greater than the law and the prophets : first the service of God, second the service of man. The service of God will so

change man that his whole attitude towards his fellows undergoes a change.

A religion confined to the brotherhood of man has never yet wrought in the individual, nor brought to mankind, anything of the abiding peace and joy, or of the lasting devotion to humanity, that comes from Christianity. Need I repeat the reason? It is because the religion of the brotherhood of man alone, being of man, is as fickle, as mutable, as man; and if sometimes as noble as man, none the less sometimes as ignoble as man.

The Christian religion is more than this. It does not depend on man alone. Christians believe in the brotherhood of man in a deeper, wider sense than do secular Socialists. They believe in the brotherhood of man because they have first believed in the Fatherhood of God.

The inspiration of Christianity, its staying power, its peace, its mercy, its patience, its charity, its long-suffering, its self-renunciation—all these things do not depend on man alone, with his liability to err and to fail one at the needed hour; they depend on the Heavenly Father Who never errs and never fails one, Who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. We Christians maintain that we cannot sincerely and for ever serve our brothers who are on earth until we have first learnt to serve our Father which art in Heaven. There can be no brotherhood without fatherhood. The brotherhood of man without the Fatherhood of God is an impossibility.

All the reform movements that men start here on earth testify to the in-born yearning of the human heart for leadership, for headship, for fatherhood. Modern Democracies only get rid of kings to elect presidents. The Labour movement lives and thrives through its leaders. The Trades Union Congress must have its president, the Labour Representation Committee its chairman.

Leadership is the very life's blood of Democracy. Without it Demo-

cracy drifts towards Anarchy. Some of the Labour leaders have been truly straight and trustworthy men, while others have been neither straight nor trustworthy. How often has one heard the echo of Isaiah's words: "O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths."

I have known many Socialists and Labour men despair because of the erring of their leaders and adherents. I have known others leave the movement because of it. But these things never fill me with despair either of movements or of men. I have always believed in the people. I believe in the people more than I believe in the Churches. The Churches are but man's images of God, but the people are God's images of Himself. The people err and fall because they put their trust in man, instead of in God their Maker. They err and fall in the service of their brothers on earth because they have not first sought the service of their Father in Heaven.

Men and movements may go astray as often as they like, I still believe in the people. But I can only believe in man as I do, because I have learnt first to believe in God.

"My Christian friends," says Mr. Blatchford, "I am a Socialist, and, as such, believe in, and work for, universal freedom, and universal brotherhood, and universal peace." All this sounds excellent, and it is the kind of thing that appeals to the popular mind; but there is something wanting—there is a fatal omission. There never will be universal freedom, nor universal brotherhood, nor universal peace on this earth, except by faith in the universal Father.

It may be said there is a complacency about this which makes many Christians neglect their duty to their fellow-men. Wherever Christians neglect that duty they are breaking the express commands of their Leader. You cannot serve God and neglect

man. Many who believe in God think they can ; and I am sorry to say that the Churches often seem to encourage this view, or at least to preach that one has nothing to mind but the things of God, as though man himself was not of the things of God.

That is one reason why the great mass of our working people feel they have little in common with the Churches to-day, and why so few of them are found allied to the Churches. Church-people to them seem so self-satisfied in their religion, so disdainful of the needs and rights of the struggling toilers outside the Churches. Church people who think that the service of God is a sufficient religion without the service of man are making the same mistake as those people outside the churches who think the service of man is a sufficient religion without the service of God. Surely the words of Christ are clear enough about our duty to man. When describing the Last Judgment to His disciples He said :

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world : for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in : naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and

ye visited me : I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee ? or thirsty, and gave thee drink ? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in ? or naked, and clothed thee ? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

If Socialists on the one side are making the mistake of trying to serve man by disregarding God, there are Christians on the other side who are making the mistake of trying to serve God by disregarding man. With many it is as though the Apostle James had never spoken :

If a brother or sister be naked, and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled ; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body, what doth it profit ?

Churchgoers want reminding that the Fatherhood of God is impossible without the brotherhood of man, just as much as Socialists want reminding that the brotherhood of man is impossible without the Fatherhood of God.

II.—WHY I RETURNED TO CHRISTIANITY

BY GEORGE LANSBURY

IT is with a good deal of reluctance that I enter into a discussion on the subject of Christianity. I do so, however, because it is the bounden duty of each of us to give, if we can, a reason for the faith that is in us.

Almost all I have to say deals with my own experience, and I give it not with the idea that it is important people should know what I have or have not thought, but in the hope that some other man or woman in the thick of the battle of right against wrong may find, as I believe I have found, some solid reason for keeping on in the struggle, however hopeless the outlook at any particular moment may be.

Nearly thirty years ago I was confirmed as a member of the Church of England, and during the first few years I was filled with a real enthusiasm born of the belief that Christ came to be an example and an inspirer of each one of us, to work on behalf of others. All the stories of men and women who had given their lives for others had a daily charm for me, and I can honestly say that in all I tried to do from that day in Spitalfields Church when I received the laying-on of hands till I was thirty years of age, was done solely because of the faith I then held.

About fourteen years ago I came in contact with some good men connected with the Socialist movement who were also Agnostics, and they convinced me that in the development of Society Socialism was bound to be born. I

read Marx and Engels, sat at the feet of Stanton Coit and others of that school, and at last gave up my religion and for at least ten years professed myself an Agnostic.

I still kept up my work on behalf of others, but four years ago I began to ask myself whether the men and women I worked amongst were worth the trouble and pains bestowed upon them, and whether, after all, it would not be much better to think of my wife and family and leave others to fight for themselves.

During this period it is true I was very ill, but the fact is I was heart sick, heart sick because of the dreadful set-back every movement for the good of the people seemed to be suffering from.

One day the thought came to me, Was I right in giving up my old faith? and if I had it again would not that carry me through all difficulties as it had carried thousands before me? And then if ever a man prayed for light and guidance I did, and after twelve months of reading and prayer, I went back publicly to the faith of my early days and once more put my trust, not in men, but in God.

I cannot demonstrate there is a God, but to me there is One to Whom I can pray and in Whose mercy I can trust. I believe I approach Him through Christ Who is my intercessor before God. I know that I am like other men weak and frail, that I commit sin and often do things I should not do, but I also know that whatever

of strength to fight sin, whatever of enthusiasm I have for working with and for others for their social salvation, comes from the fact that I believe Christ first loved and cared for me, and from my absolute faith that beyond me and yet all round me is the power of God.

After active work in the Labour movement for twenty-five years I am convinced there is only one solid foundation on which that movement can rest, and that is the foundation fact which Christ laid down that "he who would gain his life must lose it."

Let those who will smile at my professions of faith in this doctrine of Christ look back at the Labour Leaders of the past fifteen years. Where are they to-day? Take the movement itself, and how many of us without hope of reward here now stick steadily at it day in and day out; and how many of us who have been in office, have found out that we need better dress, more drink, etc., knowing the harm these kind of things do the cause? If we had all been moved by unselfish motives we should have governed our appetites and kept the movement sweet and pure.

A friend of mine, Mr. Murray Macdonald, once wrote to me after I had written to him professing my faith in economic change as the only hope of the workers, and he said something like this. If you and your fellow workmen are banded together merely to better your own positions from a purely materialistic point of view, then you may rest assured you will fail, and you will fail because the time will come when your own material interests will clash and you will have no binding link to hold you together.

I have proved this up to the hilt, have seen branches of Trade Unions rent asunder because individuals had no conception of their duty to one another, but thought only of self. I have seen Socialist branches broken up because men and women thought only of their own selfish gratification and had no regard for the movement at all; and I have seen a whole district cursed because a few men imagined that a big movement was to find them place and power without regard to the good of others.

All this has taught me that Stanton Coit was right and I wrong when I contradicted him on his saying at Bow many times that the Labour movement, without a moral basis, was bound to come to grief.

I find my moral basis in the teachings of Christ, and I find those best expressed for me in the Church and its services. To me, at any rate, it is a real thing to kneel and confess my own unworthiness, and to me also it is real to know that pardon and forgiveness come.

All this is perhaps not scientific, but then I am not a scientist. My days are spent in working for my daily bread, my evenings and leisure are spent in trying, in a small way, to help those not so well placed as I am, and, therefore, I have little time to find out, or try to find out, the supposed secrets of the Universe.

I conclude by saying that for me it is enough that Christianity helps and sustains me in my hours of trial and trouble, and gives me just the spur I need to work on behalf of others, and that it makes me a little less selfish than I otherwise should be.

III.—THE FAITH OF A SOCIALIST WORKING MAN

BY TOM ADAMS (AN EAST LONDON RAILWAY-MAN)

ONE of my favourite papers, the *Clarion*, appeared recently to have come to the conclusion that Religion has seen its day: will shortly be a thing of the past. That the time is at hand when the human race will discard altogether the Beyond and the Unseen: that the human mind is being found self-contained, equal to all calls upon it without assistance from further Power.

This notion strikes most of us at first sight as reasonable, and we congratulate ourselves on having reached this high level of intelligence. It may be well before travelling too far on this self-satisfied road to remind ourselves that this position is as old, at least, as European civilisation. I know that many of my Socialist comrades read history, and they will have gathered that, at any rate, among the Greeks, the interest in these questions was lively.

However, even with that most sceptical of peoples, the conclusion alluded to above never found general acceptance. There is so much of life that lies outside proved facts that speculation on these matters has always, at times, occupied the minds of thoughtful men and women. We refuse to be confined within the limits of the region of things proved.

May I give a simple illustration of what I mean? Why do we Socialists believe in a state of society in which the individuals will live for each other, when the only one of which we have any experience presents an uninterrupted spectacle of conflicting selfish interests?

Had Robert Burns any reasonable proof to offer of his assertion that

“Man to man the world o’er
Shall brothers be an’ a’ that”?

Eighteenth century society, with its rigid class distinctions, had surely all the proofs on its side? Burns had no proofs, he had only faith: but *Clarion* readers, at least, will hardly dismiss his belief as a chimera.

To the aspiring eye of Burns or Rousseau human society assumed a form other than any which the cold eye of reason could see any signs of in their day. To the believing heart this world of ours brings messages of a Creator and Divine Indweller of whom the scientist, as such, knows and admits nothing. You call their messages unwarranted? How much warrant had Darwin for the message which a handful of bones brought him about the origin and history of untold billions of creatures through uncounted ages? Just the warrant which every valiant and trusting soul has for its ineradicable belief that at the back of phenomena, and binding them into a system, is an all-embracing Mind. Nothing has yet transpired to prove Burns a false prophet, or Darwin either in his wider sphere.

Such another was Socrates, who, in a materialistic age, could feel assured that the Voice which drove him on his crusade against shams was Divine, and who could meet a martyr’s death in calm confidence in a future life. Do the *Clarion* readers think that Socrates is a wholly superseded person nowadays?

It is upon such precedents as these that the present writer has ventured to regard his own experiences as due to something real, and not to hallucination. Eleven years ago religion meant absolutely nothing to me. My duties as a railway-man, and my cares as a family man, took all my attention. I

took no interest in politics, nor did I recognise that I had any duties as a citizen.

Of course I was familiar enough with ordinary Sunday School Christianity. It had never occurred to me that it had any practical bearing on my life, and consequently, so far as I thought of it, I disbelieved it and derided it. In the inside of one week I was brought from this position to absolute conviction of the truth and reality of what that very Christianity sets forth, and of its infinite importance to me.

At the same time and as quickly I became a keen Socialist. I had derided that ideal, too, as impracticable. Socialism now all at once appeared as practicable as Christianity appeared true, and that, too, just because Christianity was true. The train of thought which issued in this double conviction was set agoing by an eloquent course of addresses by the Rev. Mr. Maturin in the Poplar Town Hall in 1893. Since 1893, instead of frittering away my spare time I knew not how, I have valued every moment of it, because I could spend it in studying social questions in the light of the Gospel. Nor was this a passing excitement. I am as ardent a social reformer to-day as I was immediately after my conversion; and, although a more informed, yet a no less sanguine one.

The measure of my confidence in social reform is the measure of my assurance of the truth of the Gospel, and that is absolute. The Gospel has regenerated me; the Gospel will regenerate the hideous travesty of corporate life which in bitter irony we call society. At any moment my Utopian dream may vanish in smoke through the withdrawal of what gives it corporeal reality—the Gospel. Now as always I stand or fall with the Gospel. In point of fact I am not greatly afraid that I shall wake up to find myself the victim of a sweet delusion. History—if I may take

Carlyle as my guide in interpreting it—is on my side. Carlyle was not one who blinked all that seems to deny the power of Christ about us—far from it; but he felt he could report progress, and he attributed the progress to the power of Christ.

I am frequently assured that this progress is to be assigned, not to the work of Christ, but to Civilisation with a big C. What is this beneficent power thus brought on to the stage? How does it work? Whither is it carrying us? I get no answers to these questions. Civilisation, I discover, is not a *cause* of anything. It is a description of a state of affairs, produced by some force or forces, not by itself. Civilisation is an effect, not a cause.

Others tell me that the advance made is the outcome of the nature of humanity gradually evolved and expressed in laws and institutions. I am expected to imagine that this process of moral evolution would have taken place just the same if there had been no such thing as Christianity. But the task is difficult. I cannot conjure up 1900 years of history with a portion cut out all down the line. I get mixed and lost while I am trying to do so.

There is another difficulty, weightier than my inability to re-write European history without Christianity: the myriad contributors to the march of European history, to the evolution of character and institutions I am told about, were quite certain that they made those contributions because of Christianity. Copernicus and Galileo, Erasmus and Giordano Bruno, Sir Isaac Newton and Lord Kelvin, have toiled under the orders, as they firmly believed, of an Unseen Master, whose very existence Mr. Blatchford denies.

There may be blanks in the evidence for part of the Christian story: but modern progress is the outcome of the lives, thoughts, and actions of men who believed the Christian story, and based the purpose of their lives on the faith it gave them.

IV.—THE SERVICE OF MAN

BY REV. CHARLES L. MARSON

"CIVILISATION is built up by infidels," Mr. Blatchford tells us.

There we can all agree, I think ; but, personally, since I am not at all pleased with civilisation, and much want to cure it, and consider it a scientific way of pillaging the poor, an organised hypocrisy—what St. John calls the world, and bids us not to love—I am very pleased to agree with Mr. Blatchford that it is the work of infidels, and only hope that God in His mercy will convert the infidels whose work it is, and overrule civilisation, and transform it into the Holy City, the mother of all her citizens, and the poisoner and robber of none.

Mr. Blatchford attacks a vital tenet of our faith, viz., that of God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth. He assures us that this is quite a delusion, because there are famines, convulsions, disease, war, ignorance, and pain in His world. Indeed, we have never pretended to think that there were none of these things. They are not new to us. We were not born of stocks and stones, as Socrates says. We are so well aware of the agony of life that we actually take the worst torture of the highest organism we know—that is, the death of man—and select out of all deaths the worst we have heard of, and the most undeserved and wantonly abominable, and then, having, as it were, stated the difficulty far more startlingly than Mr. Blatchford could possibly state it, we write calmly over the horror we have selected, "*Sic Deus dilexit mundum*"—"So God loved the world" !

That must be very puzzling to be-

ginners, and so, I think, they may quite fairly say to us : "This seems a great paradox. You seem to laugh either at us, or at pain and defeat and disease and death. How do you get to this position ?"

Perhaps, if folk asked this before they began to refute the wisdom of the ages, they would not be quite so sure that "the poetical and pleasing theory of a Heavenly Father and God of Love is a delusion," as Mr. Blatchford is.

But, first, let me tell those who know already that it is no delusion, that such knowledge came to the children of men with slowness and great difficulty ; that many, if not most, of the past ages of the world have not attained to it, and many, if not most, of the races of the world have not yet found it ; that David himself, in the Seventy-Third Psalm, had enormous difficulty in thinking that there was intelligence and knowledge in the chief power of the world, the Most High, and still more in believing that God could actually love those who were of a clean heart. He as nearly as possible said, "even as they," or "have with you," to the fratricidal Atheists. Consequently we must neither be astonished nor angry that men find the same difficulty of belief among ourselves, because the belief in a Heavenly Father seems rather paradoxical.

How do we arrive at it ? Before answering that, I want to say two things : First, that if we suppose the world to be a big machine of whirling wheels, made up of lifeless stuff, and if we think that this machine has a maker and engineer, who sets it all

whizzing and clattering round, and who then either interferes with it now and then, or else does not interfere with it, then I think Mr. Blatchford's shot hits us between wind and water. The engineer who really meant his machine to stamp out happiness or health, and failed to make it do so, is not a Divine Engineer, certainly, and cannot be worshipped, even if he exists. Only, you will observe, please, that in this line of argument there are three assumptions:

- (1) That the world is an engine.
- (2) That the engineer (if there is one) is outside and apart from his work.
- (3) That he meant to manufacture pleasure out of his machine, but fails to do so.

Each of these propositions I find hard to accept as reasonable.

The second thing I want to say is this—that we must not be alarmed when things turn out to be paradoxes. Mr. Blatchford, for instance, believes in Evolution. So far as I understand it—from J. H. Newman, and Darwin, and other exponents—I think he is quite right. But evolution means unwrapping or rolling out things. I want to ask you a plain question: "Was the thing unwrapped or unrolled ever in its wrapping? Suppose an amœba develops into a fish, or anthropoid ape into man. Was the fish in the amœba and the man in the ape? Yes or no?"

Now, the answer to this is both "Yes" and "No"—"Yes," because if he had not been in he could never have come out, and there would have been no evolution, only transformation. "No," because, unless the fish or man had come out, he would not have really been in. It would not then be evolution, but *status quo*.

If this is nonsense, because it is paradox, then Evolution is nonsense, and science is nonsense, and mind is nonsense, and much else besides. Bearing this in mind, let us gird up our loins, and, as it were, look frankly at the Universe for our little selves. It is certainly a wonderful sight—stars,

and grass, and seas, and all growing and fading—growing out of gas and nothing (or next to nothing) by mysterious powers we call gravity, capillary attraction, assimilation, and all sorts. It seems possible to learn *how* worlds came to be, not *what* they are. A savage can soon learn how I write, but not what I write—by *what I write* we mean what meaning, thoughts, ideas, I write. No amount of *how* and *when* tells us *what* and *why*, does it?

Well, I see evolved great power in the Universe, flaming heat, fierce lights, huge weights, unspanned space, the birth and the death of planets. That great power which is evolved must be evolved out of something at least as powerful. If you see a wave in the sea strong enough to move your sand castle at once, you may say, quite reasonably, "The sea is stronger than my sand castle." But if the wave does not wash down your castle, you cannot argue that the sea is not strong enough to do so, can you? The Universe shows power; but we cannot argue that it shows weakness, because whatever is shown is power, and the manifestation of power. We can only say this wave is not strong; much power is not put forth by the sea or the Universe.

So we may argue, from beholding power manifested, that there is power within; from power which has come out in the world we may argue that God has might. We see His might—a wave of it in the sun and the hills, and so on; but you cannot say, "The steam-hammer taps, but does not crack a nut: it is weak," nor that where there is small power put forth, as in a butterfly's stamp, that God is weak.

Now, I see present—evolved, if you like—in the Universe intelligence in men (and dogs, too, and other things). I cannot see a quart and fancy it came out of a pint pot, nor can I see intelligence and imagine it to be evolved out of blockish non-intelligence. If any corner of the Universe

shows a spark of intelligence, then I seem to see that the stuff out of which the Universe is made must be intelligent, too. He that planted the eye, shall He not see? He that made the ear, shall He not hear? But we cannot argue negatively, He that made blindness, shall He not be blind? because blindness is not something, but only the want of something. Sight may be a big wave or a small wave, but you cannot say that the sea is weaker than the wave, only stronger.

Therefore men argue, I think, unanswerably, that from intelligence, consciousness, wisdom in the man world, there must be something at least as intelligent, at least as conscious, and at least as wise, in the power which shows itself in man, in the sea of which man is the wave; and that is what we mean by God.

But not only are there wits—there is something finer: Mercy, pity, charity to be seen in some men—indeed, in most men. There is this power of tenderness in the wave—this colour in the ray. Can we reasonably say that the sea is less than its wave? or the ray more brilliant than the light which darted it forth?

Now, suppose we take an extreme instance of mercy—of a man laying down his life for others, his friends, or even his enemies. Then the wave of mercy is a large and deep one, and from that I argue that the ocean of mercy must be as deep, or even deeper, than that. But if the deep of man's pity is too shallow to cover this or that cruel enemy, I cannot argue that God's mercy is as easily bottomed, can I?

Now listen how Mr. Blatchford reasons: "Blindness, epilepsy, leprosy, madness fall like a dreadful blight upon a myriad of God's children, and the Heavenly Father gives neither guidance nor consolation. Only man helps man. Only man pities. Only man tries to save."

You see, Mr. Blatchford grants too much. If man guides and consoles,

if man pities and tries to save, then that dear human help and compassion is a ray, or many rays, from the Great Light.

I knew a boy once, Charles Lock, who saved another from drowning, and, having pushed his friend on to a rock, was swept away by the race of the channel, and died. He is buried in Clevedon Churchyard, and they have written over his bones: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, for He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

That was when Mr. Blatchford was in socks; and now he comes to teach us the sacredness of man's work for man. I don't know why men die, though I can see that without the "last enemy" the world would be unspeakably harsher and more acridly competitive and internecine than it is. But I know that our bit is to fight for health, and to love the life of men; and if death or blindness comes, to recognise that breath or eyeballs are temporary splashes and ripples of the great sea. If I have had them ever, I am part of that larger life which evolved them, contains them, and can easily reproduce them in me.

I have shown you that a belief in our Heavenly Father is not unreasonable. Now I wish to point out that without it the brotherhood of men is a meaningless expression. There is no other reason, except our fundamental unity, why we should not treat man as a living tool, so far as we can—enslave him, exploit him, pit one man against another for our pleasure or profit. Why on earth should we not use Chinamen to lower the wages and the insolence of Kaffirs and Cornish miners, if we are not really all limbs of a living social whole? Our wits, our lust of diamonds, our powers and position all point one way—towards slavery.

Then, again, Mr. Bradlaugh was reasonable. He was an Individualist. He believed in self-help, in life as a

scramble, where the strong boys are to get all the lollipops, and he wanted all legs untied, so that everyone could struggle for his share. But Mr. Blatchford has no such illusions. He is co-operative, social in his aims. He does not want us to scramble for loaves and fish, but to sit down by fifties, and be served in order. I cannot see how, if he thinks in a straight line, he can be an Individualist in religion, and how, if he believes in men being brothers, he can disbelieve in a Universal Father.

Mr. Blatchford says:—

“It is better to work for the general good, to help our weak or friendless fellow-creatures, than to pray for our own grace, or benefit, or pardon. Work is nobler than prayer, and far more dignified.”

I think we can agree here. Let us try. I hear that our butcher has a stroke, and I hurry off to see him, anxious to work, as my teacher tells me. What can I do for him? He wants fruit. Well, I can bicycle and get him some. On the way I meet his doctor, who says the poor fellow has incipient hemorrhage on the brain, and he is worrying himself into real apoplexy. So I go back to cheer him. “Work is nobler than prayer, and far more dignified,” I say to myself. But I can’t cheer him, being worried myself, and I sit by his bed, and just long to be able to do something, and still I can’t. So I have just to pray for grace for myself to cheer him, and for grace for him to be cheered and patient; and that is work, too, and, being work, is “far more dignified” than itself—which, of course, is nonsense; but Mr. Blatchford’s nonsense, and not mine.

As to the service of man, it is easy to talk about, but wants a lot of grace (or gracefulness) and pardon (because we are hardly good enough for it), and needs benefits—to pass on.

Service of man? A potman, I believe, serves his customers. That is certainly the service of man, is it

not? I do not wish to sneer at potmen at all. I rather wish to tell you that I think that people who bring drink to the thirsty are, so far, doing a Christian work, and are, indeed, a branch of the Christian ministry.

“Yes, that is all very well,” you will answer; “but the work of a potman is not always good. He often brings drink to those who have had enough already.”

Certainly; but that is the service of man, is it not? Or perhaps you would call it the disservice of man, because he is doing harm? But the action is the same, whether he brings the first pot to quench thirst, or the last to quench sense. The potman is serving man, though he begins by serving the man in man, and ends by serving the beast in man.

Perhaps we must, before we talk about the service of man, ask whether you mean the service of the good in man or of the bad in man?

Take one more instance. A friend of mine is a thief. I direct him to a certain dumpy British paterfamilias walking in the Strand, and say: “Dive into that fob pocket while that gentleman is sneering at Porkin and Snob.”

Is that the service of man? My friend the pickpocket says that he is well served, and a pickpocket is a man for a’ that.

“But what about the man from whom he steals?” you say. “I don’t call it service of man if you rob Bob to serve Bill, for by service of man we mean of man generally, not of this man against that man.”

O! I see; by service of man you mean, first, the service of what is good and wholesome in man—not bringing gin and plum cake into hospitals, but sending surgeons with lancets; not bringing rack-rents to rapacious landlords, and swag to burglars, and so on? And, secondly, you mean by service of man, service, not of some men at the expense of others, but of communal, social, or catholic man?

You would not count it to be the service of man if I took the cod-liver oil from one consumptive, Smith, to give it to another, Brown, equally deserving, because man in general would not be served at all, and by service of man you mean man in general, and the ideal man in general whom you see and find in Smith and Brown, and whom you really wish to serve?

That seems quite right, in all but one particular, and that is the language which you use. May we suggest that you can put what you want into a monosyllable—that you need not talk about serving the ideal in man or the social communal-man-in-general-in-man? it is shorter and better just to say that by all this you mean to say “Serve Christ.” Then we can all understand one another, and can agree, and can leave our squabbles and disputes, and unite in trying to get reforms brought about which are grievously hindered by Reactionary Materialism, Fatalism, Determinism, Pilatism, Barrabism, disbelief, and low spirits generally.

“Holiness!” says Mr. Blatchford. “The people are being robbed; the people are being cheated; the people are being lied to; the people are being despised, and neglected, and ruined body and soul.”

“Holiness!” we answer. “Yes, if all these unholy things are about, and as fierce and dominant as you describe, it is about time we got a little holiness

to mate and master them”; and I don’t see that we shall get much by kicking out the Ten Commandments, and adding a dozen “nots” to the Creed.

Whatever benefits are to be obtained from unholiness, we seem already to enjoy to the full. I have not observed that the envy, greed, covetousness, anger, pride, lust, and sloth of the poor have diminished these things in the rich, or that the same things in the rich have diminished them in the poor, so that I can see no advantage in railing against holiness, of which there seems all too little, and then saying: “What we want is citizenship, human sympathy, public spirit, daring agitators, stern reformers, drains, houses, schoolmasters, clean water, truth-speaking, soap, and Socialism.”

Unholiness does not seem to breed much of these things. They come in their only noble forms as the result of wisdom and great thoughts in our citizens, which, as Plato says, are “The best sentinels that God has given to watch and ward the souls of men.” They do not spring from despising the Ideal City, but from beholding it steadfastly and ceaselessly, and ordering ourselves, our towns, counties, countries, and world by the laws of no other city than this, of which the pattern, says Plato, “is laid up in Heaven for us to gaze upon,” and which Churchmen think is even nearer than that in the Church itself.

II

CHRISTIANITY AND RATIONALISM

G. K. CHESTERTON

My friend, Mr. George Haw, has asked me to state, in one or two articles, my general belief on the subject of Christianity, to be inserted in the *Clarion*. I will not pretend to any particular reluctance to do so; but I ought not to do it without first of all offering to Mr. Blatchford our gratitude, and something which is better than gratitude, our congratulations, upon the very magnanimous action which he has taken in thus putting his paper into the hands of his religious opponents. In doing so he has scored, in a generous unconsciousness, a real point.

Most of the awful revelations of Christian evil and ignorance do not, I am afraid, affect me in quite so serious a manner as they ought to. When I hear that a German professor has found the four-hundredth accurate origin of protoplasm, I try in vain to feel excitement; when I read that savages paint their faces green to please the ghosts (or what not), I have no feeling beyond a vague pleasure and sympathy. Both the German professor and the green-faced savage seem to me to be doing the same thing—that is, falling under the influence of that starry impulse which leads men to take a vast deal of trouble about quite useless things.

But such things do not make much difference to my view of Christianity. In the whole of this controversy I have felt the force of one thing, which

has really hit practical Christianity; I think it is a good argument; I think it is a terrible argument. It is that this controversy is being conducted in a non-Christian paper. It certainly is a fair point scored against a religion that the people who seem to be most interested in it are those who believe it to be a fraud. I think, therefore, that Mr. Blatchford's magnanimity, like all magnanimity, is profoundly philosophical and wise.

Nor do I blame him, as some have done, for having discussed it at great length; as the subject is the nature of the Universe, it is necessarily as large as the Universe, and as rich as the Universe, and, I may add, as amusing as the Universe.

In fact, I fancy there must be such a thing as Immortality, merely that Mr. Blatchford and I may have time to discuss whether it is true.

Before I give an outline of my view, there is one other thing to be said in which I cannot avoid the personal note. I have begun to realise that there are a good many people to whom my way of speaking about these things appears like an indication that I am flippant or imperfectly sincere. Since, as a matter of fact, I am more certain of myself in this affair than I am of the existence of the moon, this naturally causes me some considerable regret; but I think I see the naturalness of the mistake, and how it arose in people far removed from the Christian atmos-

phere. Christianity is itself so jolly a thing that it fills the possessor of it with a certain silly exuberance, which sad and high-minded Rationalists might reasonably mistake for mere buffoonery and blasphemy; just as their prototypes, the sad and high-minded Stoics of old Rome, did mistake the Christian joyousness for buffoonery and blasphemy.

This difference holds good everywhere, in the cold Pagan architecture and the grinning gargoyles of Christendom, in the preposterous motley of the Middle Ages and the dingy dress of this Rationalistic century. And if Mr. Blatchford wishes to know why we should be surprised if the Duke of Devonshire walked about with one leg red and the other yellow (as a nobleman might have done in the thirteenth century), I can obligingly inform him that it is because of the decay of our faith. Nowhere in history has there ever been any popular brightness and gaiety without religion.

The first of all the difficulties that I have in controverting Mr. Blatchford is simply this, that I shall be very largely going over his own ground. My favourite text-book of theology is *God and my Neighbour*, but I cannot repeat it in detail. If I gave each of my reasons for being a Christian, a vast number of them would be Mr. Blatchford's reasons for not being one.

For instance, Mr. Blatchford and his school point out that there are many myths parallel to the Christian story; that there were Pagan Christs, and Red Indian Incarnations, and Patagonian Crucifixions, for all I know or care. But does not Mr. Blatchford see the other side of this fact? If the Christian God really made the human race, would not the human race tend to rumours and perversions of the Christian God? If the centre of our life is a certain fact, would not people far from the centre have a muddled version of that fact? If we are so

made that a Son of God must deliver us, is it odd that Patagonians should dream of a Son of God?

The Blatchfordian position really amounts to this—that because a certain thing has impressed millions of different people as likely or necessary, therefore it cannot be true. And then this bashful being, veiling his own talents, convicts the wretched G. K. C. of paradox! I like paradox, but I am not prepared to dance and dazzle to the extent of Nunquam, who points to humanity crying out to a thing, and pointing to it from immemorial ages, as a proof that it cannot be there.

The story of a Christ is very common in legend and literature. So is the story of two lovers parted by Fate. So is the story of two friends killing each other for a woman. But will it seriously be maintained that, because these two stories are common as legends, therefore no two friends were ever separated by love or no two lovers by circumstances? It is tolerably plain, surely, that these two stories are common because the situation is an intensely probable and human one, because our nature is so built as to make them almost inevitable.

Why should it not be that our nature is so built as to make certain spiritual events inevitable? In any case, it is clearly ridiculous to attempt to disprove Christianity by the number and variety of Pagan Christs. You might as well take the number and variety of ideal schemes of society, from Plato's *Republic* to Morris' *News from Nowhere*, from More's *Utopia* to Blatchford's *Merrie England*, and then try and prove from them that mankind cannot ever reach a better social condition. If anything, of course, they prove the opposite; they suggest a human tendency towards a better condition.

Thus, in this first instance, when learned sceptics come to me and say, "Are you aware that the Kaffirs have

a story of Incarnation?" I should reply: "Speaking as an unlearned person, I don't know. But speaking as a Christian, I should be very much astonished if they hadn't."

Take a second instance. The Secularist says that Christianity has been a gloomy and ascetic thing, and points to the procession of austere or ferocious saints who have given up home and happiness and macerated health and sex. But it never seems to occur to him that the very oddity and completeness of these men's surrender make it look very much as if there were really something actual and solid in the thing for which they sold themselves. They gave up all pleasures for one pleasure of spiritual ecstasy. They may have been mad; but it looks as if there really were such a pleasure. They gave up all human experiences for the sake of one superhuman experience. They may have been wicked, but it looks as if there were such an experience.

It is perfectly tenable that this experience is as dangerous and selfish a thing as drink. A man who goes ragged and homeless in order to see visions may be as repellent and immoral as a man who goes ragged and homeless in order to drink brandy. That is a quite reasonable position. But what is manifestly not a reasonable position, what would be, in fact, not far from being an insane position, would be to say that the raggedness of the man, and the homelessness of the man, and the stupefied degradation of the man proved that there was no such thing as brandy.

That is precisely what the Secularist tries to say. He tries to prove that there is no such thing as supernatural experience by pointing at the people who have given up everything for it. He tries to prove that there is no such thing by proving that there are people who live on nothing else.

Again I may submissively ask: "Whose is the paradox?" The fran-

tic severity of these men may, of course, show that they were eccentric people who loved unhappiness for its own sake. But it seems more in accordance with commonsense to suppose that they had really found the secret of some actual power or experience which was, like wine, a terrible consolation and a lonely joy.

Thus, then, in the second instance, when the learned sceptic says to me: "Christian saints gave up love and liberty for this one rapture of Christianity," I should reply: "It was very wrong of them. But, having some notion of the rapture of Christianity, I should have been surprised if they hadn't."

Take a third instance. The Secularist says that Christianity produced tumult and cruelty. He seems to suppose that this proves it to be bad. But it might prove it to be very good. For men commit crimes not only for bad things, far more often for good things. For no bad things can be desired quite so passionately and persistently as good things can be desired, and only very exceptional men desire very bad and unnatural things.

Most crime is committed because, owing to some peculiar complication, very beautiful or necessary things are in some danger. For instance, if we wanted to abolish thieving and swindling at one blow, the best thing to do would be to abolish babies. Babies, the most beautiful things on earth, have been the excuse and origin of almost all the business brutality and financial infamy on earth.

If we could abolish monogamic or romantic love, again, the country would be dotted with Maiden Assizes. And if anywhere in history masses of common and kindly men become cruel, it almost certainly does not mean that they are serving something in itself tyrannical (for why should they?). It almost certainly does mean that something that they rightly value is in peril, such as the food of their children, the

chastity of their women, or the independence of their country. And when something is set before them that is not only enormously valuable, but also quite new, the sudden vision, the chance of winning it, the chance of losing it, drive them mad. It has the same effect in the moral world that the finding of gold has in the economic world. It upsets values, and creates a kind of cruel rush.

We need not go far for instances quite apart from the instances of religion. When the modern doctrines of brotherhood and liberality were preached in France in the eighteenth century the time was ripe for them, the educated classes everywhere had been growing towards them, the world to a very considerable extent welcomed them. And yet all that preparation and openness were unable to prevent the burst of anger and agony which greets anything good. And if the slow and polite preaching of rational fraternity in a rational age ended in the massacres of September, what an *a fortiori* is here! What would be likely to be the effect of the sudden dropping into a dreadfully evil century of a dreadfully perfect truth? What would happen if a world baser than the world of Sade were confronted with a gospel purer than the gospel of Rousseau?

The mere flinging of the polished pebble of Republican Idealism into the artificial lake of eighteenth century Europe produced a splash that seemed to splash the heavens, and a storm that drowned ten thousand men. What would happen if a star from heaven really fell into the slimy and bloody pool of a hopeless and decaying humanity? Men swept a city with the guillotine, a continent with the sabre, because Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity were too precious to be lost. How if Christianity was yet more maddening because it was yet more precious?

But why should we labour the point

when One who knew human nature as it can really be learnt, from fishermen and women and natural people, saw from his quiet village the track of this truth across history, and, in saying that He came to bring not peace but a sword, set up eternally His colossal realism against the eternal sentimentality of the Secularist?

Thus, then, in the third instance, when the learned sceptic says: "Christianity produced wars and persecutions," we shall reply: "Naturally."

And, lastly, let me take an example which leads me on directly to the general matter I wish to discuss for the remaining space of the articles at my command. The Secularist constantly points out that the Hebrew and Christian religions began as local things; that their god was a tribal god; that they gave him material form, and attached him to particular places.

This is an excellent example of one of the things that if I were conducting a detailed campaign I should use as an argument for the validity of Biblical experience. For if there really are some other and higher beings than ourselves, and if they in some strange way, at some emotional crisis, really revealed themselves to rude poets or dreamers in very simple times, that these rude people should regard the revelation as local, and connect it with the particular hill or river where it happened, seems to me exactly what any reasonable human being would expect. It has a far more credible look than if they had talked cosmic philosophy from the beginning. If they had, I should have suspected "priestcraft" and forgeries and third-century Gnosticism.

If there be such a being as God, and He can speak to a child, and if God spoke to a child in the garden, the child would, of course, say that God lived in the garden. I should not think it any less likely to be true for that. If the child said: "God is every-

where : an impalpable essence pervading and supporting all constituents of the Cosmos alike"—if, I say, the infant addressed me in the above terms, I should think he was much more likely to have been with the governess than with God.

So if Moses had said God was an Infinite Energy, I should be certain he had seen nothing extraordinary. As he said He was a Burning Bush, I think it very likely that he did see something extraordinary. For whatever be the Divine Secret, and whether or no it has (as all people have believed) sometimes broken bounds and surged into our work, at least it lies on the side furthest away from pedants and their definitions, and nearest to the silver souls of quiet people, to the beauty of bushes, and the love of one's native place.

Thus, then, in our last instance (out of hundreds that might be taken), we conclude in the same way. When the learned sceptic says : "The visions of the Old Testament were local, and rustic, and grotesque," we shall answer : "Of course. They were genuine."

Thus, as I said at the beginning, I find myself, to start with, face to face with the difficulty that to mention the reasons that I have for believing in Christianity is, in very many cases, simply to repeat those arguments which Mr. Blatchford, in some strange way, seems to regard as arguments against it. His book is really rich and powerful. He has undoubtedly set up these four great guns of which I have spoken. I have nothing to say against the size and

ammunition of the guns. I only say that by some accident of arrangement he has set up those four pieces of artillery with the tails pointing at me and the mouths pointing at himself. If I were not so humane, I should say : "Gentlemen of the Secularist Guard, fire first."

But there is more to be said. Mr. Blatchford, for some reason or other (possibly want of space), has neglected to urge all the arguments for Christianity. And, oddly enough, the two or three arguments he has omitted to state are the really vital and essential ones. Without them, even the excellent four facts which he and I have respectively explained may appear superficially unintelligible.

Why will many of you not accept my four explanations? Obviously, in mere logic, they are as logical as Mr. Blatchford's. It is as reasonable, in the abstract, that a truth should be distorted as that a lie should be distorted; it is as reasonable, in the abstract, that men should starve and sin for a real benefit as for an unreal one. You will not believe it because you are armed to the teeth, and buttoned up to the chin with the great Agnostic Orthodoxy, perhaps the most placid and perfect of all the orthodoxies of men. You could sooner believe that Socrates was a Government spy than believe that he heard a voice from his God. You could more easily think that Christ murdered His mother, than that He had a psychic energy of which we know nothing. I approach you with the reverence and the courage due to a bench of bishops

III

CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE

REV. J. CARTMEL-ROBINSON

HAECKEL says there are three buttresses of superstition: (1) God; (2) Free Will; (3) Immortality. And I might believe it if I were Haeckel; but being one of the "poor little curates" whom Huxley despised, I cannot.

Why? Because I am a curate, with a curate's mind—a small thing, but mine own; with a curate's eyes, through which I try to see for myself; and a curate's prejudice, which refuses to accept the imperium of a scientific man as a divine right.

Nevertheless, "poor little curate" though I be, I cannot forego my own judgment because it happens to clash with theirs, seeing that many things are hidden from the wise and prudent which are revealed unto babes. I have noticed, too, how ill-balanced and ill-proportioned some of the scientific giants were, as though all their strength had been absorbed by one organ, to the exclusion of others, so that, while they were strong in some respects, yet in others they seemed contemptibly weak, like the image whose head was of fine gold, but whose feet were of clay. And, again, I have read how they disagreed among themselves, and changed their opinions from time to time, all which kept me from worshipping any of them in particular, or together. For this I am increasingly thankful.

In the old days, and among primitive peoples, I think you would find

the spiritual faculty fully awake—the consciousness among men that, though their roots were here in the earth, yet, like the tree Igdrasil, they could reach up into heaven. I am aware that Grant Allen spoke contemptuously of this religion as "a grotesque fungoid growth clustered round the thread of ancestor worship," but I don't agree with Grant Allen. Though they might not be able to express it scientifically, there was the idea of two distinct modes of existence—the material, and the immaterial or spiritual, which was, and must for ever remain, the basis of true religion.

Here, then, is the rock on which all Theists have taken their stand. Against this rock Science has launched all its artillery. Once the attack was a purely materialistic one. It was claimed that Matter was the foundation of the Universe: life and all the phenomena of life were explicable by the principles of physics, even memory, will, hate, love, noble aspirations, pity, and the rest. It seemed so simple. A Dr. Bartian experimented, and lo! in support of his theory, spontaneous generation! The air was tremulous with expectation; but, alas for him! it was found that his infusions were imperfectly sterilised. Further experiments under more rigorous conditions all proved barren.

You will easily perceive that this theory, whereby the organic or living was evolved from something which in

itself was entirely lifeless, could not exist as a working hypothesis for any long period. And, indeed, a little philosophy soon showed the early scientists their errors. It was untenable, so they gave it up, and I think I am right in saying that all the better accredited scientists of later years have utterly disclaimed it.

Haeckel, who is sometimes mistakenly called a Materialist, repudiates the idea that Science can have anything to do with "the Materialism which denies the existence of spirit, and describes the Universe as a heap of dead atoms." Indeed, he admits—but very foolishly, as I shall show presently—that modern Science in many ways resembles Deism.

Practically, he is as far from our position as the Materialist was. He has only been forced by a study of philosophy which scientific men once ignorantly despised, much as they despise religion now, to renew the attack in another form.

Huxley, in his *Physical Basis of Life*, says it (the theory of Materialism) "is as utterly devoid of justification as the most baseless theological dogma." Again, speaking of the distinctive properties of living matter, he says: "Its chemical composition contains the so-called protein, which has never yet been obtained except as a product" of living bodies.

Darwin says: "If we consider the whole Universe, the mind refuses to look at it as the outcome of chance—that is, without design or purpose." When it was claimed that his views explain the Universe, he called it, "a most monstrous exaggeration."

Finally, let us take Mr. Herbert Spencer. He says: "The tendency is less to a Universe of dead matter than to a Universe everywhere alive." And, again, "considering that, finally, I have taught that force, as we know it, can be regarded only as a *conditional effect of the unconditioned cause*, the unknowable"—italics mine—"I might

reasonably have thought no one would have called me a Materialist."

So, you see, Science has made what it calls a re-statement of the position. It has "gone to Canossa," though it said it would not; that is to say, speaking plainly, it has bowed the knee to philosophy, and embodied the ideas of Spinoza, the "God-intoxicated philosopher" of the seventeenth century. Nay, it has gone further, describing a parabola like some wandering star, and its God may almost be described in the words of the most Ancient Brahm: "I am the sun and moon. I am the brilliancy in flame, the sounds in air, the fragrance in earth, the eternal seed in all things that exist, the life in all. I am the goodness of the good. I am the beginning, middle, end, eternal in time, the birth and death of all."

It is granted, then, that Science has shifted ground. For example, the conception of chemistry has been revolutionised within our time; and astronomy as a science has been continually recast, the movements of the planets at one time being described as in cycles, then in epicycles, afterwards in ellipses, and finally—up to the present time—in spirals. A wonderful thing about it was that the elliptic movement was demonstrated to be absolutely correct by the eclipses. But then it was remembered that Tycho Brahe had foretold them just as correctly on the hypothesis of the epicycle!

I do not mention these cases to discredit Science. God forbid! We can never be thankful enough to the astronomer and the chemist for the new worlds they have discovered, and as for me, I shall always consider it a bounden duty, as my Catechism teaches, to order myself lowly and reverently before my betters. But I do mention it as a warning to those who differentiate between Religion and Science, in favour of the latter, on the ground that its processes are certain, whereas Religion can depend on nothing but feeling. I deny both con-

clusions. (1) Science, no less than religion, depends ultimately on a postulate—an assumption; (2) Religion does not depend merely on emotion, but also on reason and intellect. Lest we should despise emotion, however, or leave it out as a factor, I would again appeal to one of our opponents. "At any rate, one significant truth is made clear," says Herbert Spencer—I venture to call him so indifferently, without the prefix, as one of the immortals—"that in the genesis of a system of thought the emotional nature is a large factor—perhaps as large a factor as the intellectual nature."

One thing must be clearly perceived by the quotations I have given from representative men hostile to what I may call, in the language of accommodation, Revealed Religion—this: that the old dogmatic Atheism is, for all practical purposes, as dead as Queen Anne. Persons like Gustave Flourens and the man in the park, who contend that it is a first duty to banish any idea of God, and that there can be no real progress till every trace of Religion is rooted out—these are a negligible quantity; they may be said not to exist.

Of Agnosticism, Deism, Pantheism, Positivism, Secularism, Pessimism, and the rest as systems of philosophy, what can I say, except to ask the pardon of their adherents for thus lumping them together in so heterogeneous a company? Besides, my space is limited, and my time, as a "poor little curate."

Suffice it to say, all have a banner and a following; they are all rival systems to Theism; and I may say, with equal truth, they are all rival systems to one another.

I cannot speak of them in detail, but I will undertake to prove what I shall now affirm, if it be necessary, and, on this understanding, I will ask you to take my word for what I say—supported, of course, by your own knowledge, which may easily be

superior to my own—that they are all utterly inadequate to account for cosmical phenomena; that they all fail to satisfy the great generic instincts in man as to love and morality and the deep things of the soul; that they all fail to give us assurance of an immortality which can in any sense be desired as the fulfilment of our human desires.

But there is one kind of philosophy for which I will ask your attention a very little while: Idealism. The old preachers of this cult, like Schelling and Hegel, made a fundamental error in ignoring the methods of true science, and creating an imaginary one of their own, which was so obviously absurd that their philosophy fell into discredit.

But the fashion of it has revived: it no longer invents a scientific formula of its own, but accepts what the Scientific Monists provide, with this tremendous reservation: that scientific truths are not what scientific men suppose, *i.e.*, concrete truths, but abstract. This visible Universe—well, it simply has no existence external to ourselves, and—mark this—instead of mind being the creature of substance, substance is the mere creature of mind.

At first sight, their fundamental seems too absurd to discuss; but reflect, and you will perceive that it is not without some shadow of reasonableness. First appearances are nearly always deceptive. A simple observer naturally thinks he is surrounded by a world of objective realities existing independent of himself. By-and-by, however, he realises that a flower is not the same to him and the man who is colour-blind or lacks the sense of smell: that music does not convey the same meaning to him and the man who is deaf to the "course of sweet sounds": that, in short, things exist only relatively to our own sensibility. So he will realise, with a wider mental horizon, that the

vibrating ether might project light waves and sound waves for all time in space, but without the receiving eye or ear to transform them into light and sound, Nature might remain as dark and silent as the tomb.

It is scarcely necessary to say that Idealistic philosophy, disbelieving in external reality, is contrary both to the teaching of Science and Religion. I only mention it to show how fundamentally opposed to each other are the teachings of men who oppose the principles of our religion, and to afford the Idealist an opportunity of condemning Monists like Huxley, Spencer, and Haeckel, as they themselves have condemned the Materialists. In a process of elimination, it is sometimes allowable to make use of such antagonisms.

Science, according to Professor Ward, the Idealist—and it is generally admitted—teaches that everything, conscious life included, is evolved from substance *by a process of mechanical laws, and that the actions of living creations have a sense of purpose, but this sense of purpose does not determine their action.*

Consider this hypothesis of the Scientific Monists:

1. We are "evolved from substance by a process of mechanical laws." I do not see where they get the authority for such an audacious statement; but suppose we try to accept it with our eyes shut—what then? Does it explain anything? What is the driving power in this "process of mechanical laws"? Where and in what is the virtue by which we enjoy a living relationship to each other? What determines the trend of evolution? Without some explanation—which I know they cannot give me—I must decline to accept their statement as adequate. After all, it is only a cast-iron model of an engine that won't work.

2. Our "actions have a sense of purpose, but this sense of purpose

does not determine our action." This sense of purpose, then, like the generic sense of immortality and a hundred other expansive senses, is only a make-believe, seeming to be something when it is nothing, and to exercise a power which it does not really possess; so that a man is no more a real participant in the life-drama than the mario-nettes, or the automatic gentlemen whom I saw striking the clock bells in Cheapside to-day. Is this a working hypothesis? And in persistently asking such questions the practical man will perceive the sacredness of common sense, as he will also perceive the nonsense which is neither believable nor sacred. We know the hypothesis won't work, for if man could possibly persuade himself that he is a machine-made creature of a day, and that his actions are no more determined by his own personality than a wave of the sea determines its motion, what do you think the human race would come to in ten centuries? Why, pure animalism. Even the shadow of fatalism destroys those on whom it rests; but the thing itself—why, it would sap all the foundations of the higher life, and man, when the process had worked itself out, would revert to type.

Letourneau, a disciple of the Monist School, seems to think he is saying a fine thing when he is smashing our "hallucinations" and reducing humanity to its machine-made proportions. Listen to him: "The human being, then," when he has been in the machine-shop of the Monists, "knows that his poor personality is but a passing existence, since it springs only from the ephemeral grouping of indestructible atoms, which the shock of death will one day disperse. From this moment man is really a man." Whatever M. Letourneau feels, I am not sensible of any exhilaration. I don't feel, on reading this, that for the first time I am really a man; but M. Letourneau must pardon my want of perception.

But the Monists condemn themselves out of their own mouth, for though they reject purpose as a factor in organic evolution, yet the struggle for existence in the individual can mean nothing but that; they cannot account for it by any other postulate of their own.

I have spoken of Idealism. It is diametrically opposed to Scientific Monism—that is, to the doctrine of substance and mechanical laws—because it asserts that they have no existence save subjectively. Need I say that this School is as much opposed to our Theistic conception as the other? Need I refute its weakness? No, for it is too clearly demonstrable. To tell us that the visible world and the great Cosmos would cease to exist if every human being died is an absurdity. Hume once and for all disposed of their arguments years ago.

And yet Spencer, Huxley, and the later Agnostic scientists confess that there is absolutely no proof, no certainty, for the existence of a world external to ourselves by any process of reason, but that it is apprehended only by the generic instinct of men or by an act of faith. So that they, too, have to adopt our methods and appeal to something outside of pure reason in accounting for phenomena.

All mechanical systems fail. They are no explanations, only contradictions. Even the new theory of the Monists that the Universe consists of bodies separated by ether, equally with the old—that it consists of material bodies separated by empty space—both fail, both can be reduced to an absurdity by logical methods, to say nothing of the assumptions which the Monists make with regard to the organic, and especially the moral world.

And yet some men prefer the methods of Science to those of Religion, opposing what is not necessarily and essentially opposed, because, in their estimation, the former is sure of itself,

and only makes statements which it can substantiate, whereas Religion is subjective, and sentimental, and perceptive.

Have we ever realised to what absurdity the analytical faculty can reduce our ideas, unless it is balanced by synthesis? And this both in the cosmic and moral world—the domain of Science and Religion equally. If we have not, then the first and most necessary lesson in controversy has been missed.

Again, have we realised that moral and religious ideas cannot be made intelligible to mere logical understanding, nor be verified by any evidence which is outside of and lower than themselves? They belong—like music and art, and the instinct for beauty of colour, and form, and sound—to a sphere beyond the jurisdiction of reason, namely, the sphere of perception, and are independent of those logical or critical faculties on which Science chiefly relies. If we have not learned this second lesson also, controversy is bound to prove barren.

For the scientific man and the religious man to fight, each with their own proper weapons, is to beat the air; they do not come nigh each other. At best, they can only utter loud challenges, while the spectator sees all the time that the fight in reality never comes off.

No wonder, then, that Science does not seem reconcilable with religion. The great wonder would be if it did. Science cannot even be reconciled to itself in its present state. We must feel—if we study it fairly and “without bias,” as Spencer would remind us—that, on the whole, it is in a state of solution, and very few facts, comparatively, have been precipitated.

On the other hand, I admit quite freely, so far as I am concerned, that neither can the conflicting elements in our religion be reconciled. For example, I cannot reconcile the Omnipotence of God with the existence of evil. There

I am at one with my friend Blatchford. Differing from him, however, in these two particulars : (1) That I see no possibility of a satisfactory explanation for the presence of evil in the world along the route he is travelling, because evil must be inherent, whereas I do see a way out ultimately along my road, because evil is not inherent ; (2) that the impossibility of reconciling two conflicting truths is no bar to my belief. I find the same impossibility meeting me every way I turn, but it does not prevent me from living a practical life.

Before I conclude let me say a Credo, lest some perturbed soul should write and ask me if I really believe in God. I do believe in God, and am persuaded that when the darkness comes about me, and my strength fails, I shall touch God's right hand in the darkness, and be lifted up and strengthened.

And because I believe in God I believe in free will and in everlasting life.

Never will the children of men consent to be enslaved by this base superstition, this blind, inhuman fetish, called "Substance and Mechanical Law," even though 10,000 Haeckels should trumpet it. A people that has once worshipped God will not with open eyes worship devils. When God gave man the breath of life, and he became a living soul, and could hold his forehead to the sun, then he became conscious of something within himself greater than "*mechanical law*." Again, when Jesus Christ taught him to pray to the Father, he became conscious of a still fuller and grander life. Thereupon he went out from the shadow of bondage, and broke away from the fetters of *judicial law*, even as he had done from *mechanical law* in the childhood of his days. Then, indeed, he became a free man in his Father's house.

Can we forego that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and go back

by a revision of the evolutionary process "to the weak and beggarly elements?"

Or can we bring ourselves to disbelieve in immortality, the third great truth which Haeckel assails?

To tell us that man is like a bubble on the face of the sea to be re-absorbed may seem possible to the scientific mind which merely takes account of physical causation. But it is just here that we quarrel with scientific methods. In its study of man's being, instead of starting from the true centre, which is man's self, it foolishly seeks to dissociate itself from humanity and to stand outside of itself, merely introducing man incidentally. Such a process is futile and impossible if we are to make real advancement in the knowledge of our own being. This is why the great moral perception and generic faculties of man have to be ignored by the Monist in order to make human life square with his preconceptions. I have not space to deal with the great question of immortality further than by suggesting the incapacity of men like Haeckel to teach us: "Deep" only "calleth unto deep."

But human nature rebels against their conclusions. If it could even be reduced to accept them, I should despair of the future. For then indeed the toil of man would become weariness and his aspirations a bitter mockery. Then the lullaby of the mother over her babe's cradle would end in sighs and the repression of despair. Then the patter of the children's feet would slow down until it became a funeral march to the grave. Then no human being could look into the face of his beloved for pain and agony of heart.

But this can never be. The "divine something" within me, as Plato calls it, assures me that life and not death is the end of man. Let us take courage therefore, for God is in heaven, and in His light we shall see light.

IV

CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIONS

I.—THE IDEA OF GOD AND PRIMITIVE RELIGIONS

Professor Moulton, M.A., D.Lit.

II.—BUDDHISM AND MODERN HUMANISM . . . *Dr. W. St. Clair Tisdall*

I.—THE IDEA OF GOD AND PRIMITIVE RELIGIONS

PROF. MOULTON, M.A., D.LIT.

THE Editor of the *Clarion* has told us that no man should regard the subject of religion as decided for him until he has read *The Golden Bough* by Dr. Frazer. In making a few remarks on this subject, I might comment on the immense amount of open-mindedness which would result from the general following of this advice. It is not every working man that can afford time to read a book of 1,400 pages even if he has access to a library, which will save him the 36s. he would have to pay for the book. Nor is it every intelligent man who has the special training needed to follow the intricacies of a science so complicated as anthropology.

Having mentioned this objection, I may go on to show what *The Golden Bough* really has to do with religion. Let me say, to begin with, that I write as a personal friend of the distinguished author, and an enthusiastic admirer of the book, which has enabled me to see, as never before, how perfectly Christianity was adapted to the instincts of universal human nature. I do not pretend, of course, that this is Dr. Frazer's own inference from the facts he has collected and the far-reaching

theories he has built upon them. A great and (in the true sense of a much-abused term) epoch-marking work of pure science, it is, in my opinion, just as much or just as little concerned with the truth of Christianity as was *The Origin of Species* a generation ago. The fact is that, though Christian teachers differ in the readiness with which they can assimilate discoveries in the external world, they all, sooner or later, come to understand that the essence of their faith lies in a region into which physical science cannot enter, or any other science that has to do with phenomena. Men of science, as such, know no more about the riddle of the human soul than they knew two thousand years ago; and if religion has to do with the relations between God and the soul, it is obvious that its sphere lies essentially beyond the range of knowledge which is of things we see and hear and feel. I am free, therefore, to be Dr. Frazer's willing disciple in anthropological science; but if even he were to tell me that his science forbade my faith, I must reply that it could not possibly come nearer than the outworks; the citadel remains secure.

As a matter of fact, there are not half-a-dozen pages in his big book in which his personal deductions from the inquiry are even hinted at: and how little we fear this latest of the sciences as a foe to Christianity may be well seen from the effort that many of us made to secure Dr. Frazer for the chair of Comparative Religion in the Manchester University (Theological Faculty). Personally, I am quite certain that our divinity students would have been in no danger of weakened convictions had we succeeded in persuading him to leave his busy Cambridge workshop for a teaching post up here.

A versatile and bitter reviewer of *The Golden Bough*, Andrew Lang has been largely responsible for a widely spread impression that the book contains an offensive attack upon Christianity in the famous section about Haman. I shall not discuss this, because I cannot see what on earth the potholer is all about. In what Dr. Frazer himself regards as a purely subsidiary passage, it is suggested that the people's choice between Barabbas and Jesus was based upon a kind of annual miracle-play, in which one of two criminals was hanged in the character of Haman, and the other fêted in that of Mordecai. The history of this usage, going back far into the most primitive conditions of human thought, is traced by Dr. Frazer with immense learning; but the actual connection of the Passion story with it he does not pretend to prove, but only to render probable. That Christianity stands to lose anything even by its complete establishment it puzzles me to see. If Jesus really died "in the character of Haman," it is certainly a very startling illustration of the statement that He "was numbered with the transgressors," a statement which I read in a much older book than *The Golden Bough*.

I do not, however, imagine that the Editor of the *Clarion* is simple enough to regard this episode as the really

deadly ammunition for which this great scientific work is so indispensable an arsenal. Long before *God and My Neighbour* was thought of, some of us ventured to predict the anti-Christian argument which would be based on Dr. Frazer's theory. The book is a history of the evolution of religion. For my present purpose I have no difficulty in calling it a *complete* history—just as far complete as Darwin's *Descent of Man* is for the history of the evolution of humanity. But everybody has by this time found out that Darwin—assuming the scientific proof of his hypothesis—only explained the history of the human *body*. The development of the brain of a Shakespeare may now be traced, for all I know to the contrary, with approximate certainty through all its countless steps, from the protoplasm upwards. But are we any nearer to an understanding of the mysterious *I* that uses the machine which has been so wonderfully prepared? Even so, I cheerfully acknowledge that Dr. Frazer has probably traced a large part of the development history of religion, from its most primitive stages up to the point represented by the lower strata of Christianity. His book throws light on the history and meaning of rites and ceremonies, superstitious beliefs and institutions, everything in religion which can be studied from the *outside*; but the *soul* of religion, the nature of man's innermost relations with God, his science has to leave alone. You might as well bring a microscope to examine, not the human brain, but the mind that uses it as its tool.

I have said that this book teaches us much as to the evolution of religion. And why not? We Christians say that God "made" man, and that He "revealed" religion. Yes, but these phrases only tell us the result; they say nothing as to the process. We do not suppose that God made man as a sculptor makes a model of clay; nor that He revealed religion by dictating

a creed to a human scribe, who took it down word by word. If evolution truly describes the method of God's working in the material world, it seems natural that it should describe His method when He would teach men the highest knowledge—the knowledge of Himself. There are sundry books which the R.P.A. are circulating, by way of showing how the idea of God came into men's minds. It is really very superfluous trouble on their part. Even without the aid of the late Mr. Grant Allen, we might have reached the conclusion that God's way of teaching men would probably differ materially from the methods of the school-master or the journalist. It all depends upon our willingness or unwillingness to postulate a First Cause for the Universe. Physical science has not yet found out how to do without one, and (if it is ever safe to prophesy) we may say she never will. That we do not know how the first start was given to evolutionary processes, that our available methods give us no road by which we may find out God, is the utmost a truly scientific man can venture to assert, and the Bible said as much as this long ago. Instead of simply confessing ignorance, Christians say that this First Cause is GOD, and that He has made Himself known to them in their own consciousness, where they are as certain of His presence as they are of the air they breathe. But if they are right, the very definition of God excludes restriction within the narrow limits of our knowledge. If all over the world and in every age all men have an idea of the divine—and the great anthropologist Tylor has told us that every attempt to find exceptions to that rule has broken down—it seems to us reasonable to say that God put it into their minds. And if competent anthropologists show us that it arose out of dreams, ghosts, magic, nature-personification, or anything else, we have only to reply that these interesting inquiries may, if proved, tell

us *how* God evolved in human minds the first intuitions of Himself. A whole library of Rationalist Press books will not avail to make that answer other than rational.

But the idea of God is not the only theological conception which anthropology helps us to trace in its historical development. *The Golden Bough* is full of evidence that the Christian belief in a Divine Being who becomes incarnate, suffers an atoning death, and imparts a divine life to those who, as it were, "feed upon" Him, is abundantly paralleled in the most primitive religious rites and doctrines of savage or semi-civilised men. The parallels seem repulsive enough to a Christian until he finds the key. They mean simply that God's whole plan for revealing Himself perfectly in Christ followed the lines of human development. It was a development which included a surfeit of ghastly, foul, and cruel scenes. They follow inevitably from the consideration that if man's assent to God's moral law was to be of any moral worth, was to be anything but mechanical, he must have power to refuse obedience. But the great sweep of God's purpose was not stayed, and even in their darkest rites of superstition men were receiving, as well as their capacity allowed, the germs of truth, which would bear fruit some day. Is it an accident that, whereas deep thinkers and learned theologians seem unable to attain intellectual agreement on the mystery of the Atonement, simple savages in Erromanga or Uganda or Fiji have grasped the *fact* of it so easily? Their own savage beliefs had prepared them for it; and when the missionaries came, the message transformed the cannibal savage into a gentle and kindly man. There are still some cannibals left in out-of-the-way corners. Might not the R.P.A. send out a few consignments of books to enlighten their darkness before the Bible can get to them? It really seems to argue lack of enterprise to

restrict their publications to a country where the vendors run no exciting risk of being killed and eaten for their pains. I have a great admiration for the author of *Merrie England*, all the more so because he confesses that Jesus Christ inspired him. Would not his later thoughts on Christianity receive their crowning justification if he were to preach his gospel, say, to the wild men of the Andaman Islands, and achieve results like those which made Charles Darwin a regular subscriber to a Christian missionary society?

The mention of missionary societies suggests another side of the subject of this paper. The relation between Christianity and other religions seems to be rather a leading topic with some people, who think that any stick will do to beat a dog with. Various somewhat amateurish excursions in the field of comparative religion are held to prove that every religion is just as good as another, and rather more so. Buddhism, in particular, has become a great favourite of late with inhabitants of a country in which Buddhism is hardly likely to be a dangerous rival to Secularism. It is described as a pleasing contrast to Christianity, and as the source of many conspicuous elements in the latter. The things which happened to Buddha suggested the things which were said to happen to Christ; and, by way of making it easier to believe this eminently plausible doctrine, we are further told that neither Buddha nor Christ ever existed. The way in which these things came into the fertile brains of the people who invented Buddha, and so made it possible for other people to invent Christ, is explained to us in all its charming and convincing simplicity in the pages of *God and My Neighbour*. It is all our old, old friend, the Solar Myth. Mr. Blatchford or the R.P.A. —I really don't know to whom the credit of this discovery is due—ought to invest in a few modern books. They might be surprised to find that

the Solar Myth method of dealing with ancient history was laughed out of court a generation ago by the simple process of proving almost every character in human annals to have been really only a fabulous personage invented out of the daily doings of the sun. Professor Tylor, in his famous book, *Primitive Culture*, shows amusingly how exceedingly solar Julius Cæsar is. The same principle has been applied to Shakespeare and Napoleon. It would, indeed, be the easiest thing in the world to prove to the students of the twenty-first century that Mr. Blatchford never really existed, but was only a Solar Hero, a Phaethon, who let some light into a variety of dark places, until at last he went off the road, and had a nasty spill. Let us hope the story is not going to end quite so dismally as its classic parallel.

The old-fashioned Solar Myth is so exquisitely funny to all who know anything about it, that I must be forgiven for having the luxury of a little relaxation. I will relapse into seriousness at once. First, as to the assertions that Buddhism, Islam, Parsism, and the rest may fairly set up as rivals to Christianity. They are best answered by the simple challenge to *read the Sacred Books of the East*, which may be seen now in fifty goodly tomes of the Oxford Press, translated by the best scholars of the day. If any one can get through them, and then answer with a straight face the question how they compare with the Bible, he is to be heartily congratulated on the sturdiness of his prejudices. The taste of the whole educated world might safely be appealed to, if blind partisans are bent on belittling the supreme beauty and nobility of the Bible. I might focus the universal verdict by referring to the eloquent preface of a book entitled *Passages of the Bible Chosen for Their Literary Beauty and Interest*. The book is by Dr. J. G. Frazer, the author of *The Golden Bough*. Fancy pictures of King Asoka, drawn with

exaggeration that takes one's breath away, are not sufficient evidence for this reversal of the judgment of the civilised world.

I am thankful for the many noble words of King Asoka, but deeds are more than words; and when Mr. Blatchford sets him up as a rival to Christ, to whom once he confessed himself indebted beyond any other human being, I feel that the cleverest and most sincere of men may sometimes become so purblind with prejudice that their opinion need no longer be taken seriously.

We are presented, on p. 112 of *God and My Neighbour*, with some passages from a book on Buddhism by Mr. Arthur Lillie. There is an extract there from Burnouf, who really was a great scholar. But he wrote two generations ago, and a good many things have been found out since then. The theory we are to accept is that Buddhism influenced the Essenes, a mysterious ascetic community in Palestine, and that Christianity thence acquired various Buddhist features. If Mr. Lillie turned to recent authorities on the Essenes—say Professor Jülicher or Mr. Conybeare, neither of them troubled with too much “orthodoxy”—he would find that the very possibility of the Essenes having been affected by Buddhism is not considered worth discussing to-day. With this, of course, goes all thought of supposing Christianity influenced by Buddhist legends or teaching. There is no link which would satisfy a historical student.

Those who would like to pursue further the well-known problem of the resemblances between Christianity and Buddhism will find an impartial summary in a book recently published, called *India, Old and New*, by the renowned Indian scholar, Professor E. W. Hopkins, of Yale (Edward Arnold), pp. 120 ff. It is there shown that only one of the five alleged “cogent parallels” has any weight at all—and that is not much—while in the subsidiary

parallels Buddhism is often probably borrowing, since they belong conspicuously to the later documents. The difficulties in the way of a borrowing theory are set forth by Professor Hopkins with irresistible force. We may add that resemblances between one religion and another are so frequently found that scientific study very soon becomes suspicious of them.

The perusal of *The Golden Bough* would prove to any open mind that the most amazing coincidences may exist between widely separated religions. Dr. Frazer collects these parallel usages, beliefs, and rites from all parts of the world, and explains them merely as similar results arising from similar conditions. In examining scientifically the common features of Buddhism and Christianity, we must constantly remember this caution, and remember also that, in comparing two religions in order to decide whether either borrowed from the other, we must take much more account of differences than of resemblances. The latter are, in the vast majority of cases, mere coincidences, but in the former we find the true characteristics of the religion. To belittle the supremacy of Christ's teaching because there are some parallels to parts of it scattered over the ancient world is not worthy of one who claims to speak in the name of science. If Jesus had had a set of the *Sacred Books of the East* before Him, translated into His own language by scholars such as we have to-day, it would have demanded profound religious genius to select from the mass of commonplace or worthless matter the gems which could take their place in one little corner of the crown of brilliants that sparkles on His head. Since Jesus—or the committee of geniuses which we must imagine if Jesus never existed—knew no other language than Aramaic, Hebrew, and probably a little Greek, it is obvious that His originality is not affected by any parallels to His teaching which may be

found elsewhere. For myself, I rejoice in every grain of truth which can be found in Buddhism or in the religion of the veriest savage. They all bear fruit for Christ's harvest, and we claim that He that sowed them was the Son of Man. He came when the preparation for Him had reached its fittest point, and "made current coin"—as Tennyson says—of a body of truth universally acknowledged to be without equal or second in the world's literature. The Gospels have to be explained somehow, and if every miracle in them were denied we should still call in vain for a theory which would explain how

their authors managed to invent words and deeds so utterly unlike anything else that their contemporaries produced. We do not pretend that Christianity has no unsolved problems to exercise our brains and our faith; but we claim that a whole-hearted surrender to its teaching produces the finest and most unselfish lives, and that the perfect following out of its Founder's precepts and example—imperfectly realised, or even perverted, by many Christians in every age, as that which is divinely perfect must be by imperfect man—will some day bring forth a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

II.—BUDDHISM AND MODERN HUMANISM

DR. W. ST. CLAIR TISDALL

IN *God and My Neighbour*, Mr. Blatchford makes a number of statements about Buddha and Buddhism, some of which I may be permitted to examine. I should not venture to ask for a hearing on the subject, were it not that I have lived for years in India, and have also studied many of the oldest Buddhist scriptures and some of Asoka's inscriptions in Pali, and am acquainted with many of the later Buddhistic works in Sanskrit, to say nothing of the best German, French, and English writers on the subject. I am not, therefore, dependent upon more or less correct English versions or paraphrases of the books of the Buddhist canon and the inscriptions such as those quoted by Mr. Blatchford.

In the interests of truth it is unfortunate that Mr. Blatchford did not devote a very great deal more study to the subject before rushing into print. Had he done so, he would not have ventured to make so many of the positive assertions which he everywhere employs with such telling force in lieu of arguments. This, of course, applies to the whole of his book. But I am now concerned only with Buddhism.

Mr. Blatchford does not believe that Buddha ever existed (p. 9), though this does not prevent Mr. Blatchford from telling us when Buddha died (p. 157), nor from praising his virtues (pp. 172, 173)! But this is a mere detail. Mr. Blatchford evidently has rashly adopted Stewart's theory that Buddha was a Solar Myth. Has he ever heard

of *Historical Doubts Regarding the Existence of Napoleon Buonaparte*? All scholars know that the Sun Myth theory—in reference, not to Buddha only, but to another in regard to whom Mr. Blatchford uses it—is as dead as the dodo. We really have a right to ask for something a little more up to date in 1904. If we cannot have facts, or even plausible arguments, we should at least be entertained with the very latest theories.

Mr. Blatchford, among other things, asserts: That many of the Gospel statements about incidents in Christ's life and particulars of His teaching are borrowed from other religions. Those who wish to see this baseless assertion briefly reduced to the absurd should read *Religio Critici* (S.P.C.K.). But we are assured that at least (a) the Virgin Birth, (b) the Temptation, and (c) possibly the Golden Rule were borrowed from Buddhism.

Now, in the first place, none of these things are mentioned in Asoka's Inscriptions (reigned B.C. 257–220), nor in the Canonical Pali Scriptures of the Southern Buddhists (reduced to writing, according to the Mahāvamso, about B.C. 80). Buddha's virgin-birth is denied in all early Buddhist literature, and first hesitatingly insinuated in a work by Asvaghosha, which, as Prof. Cowell says, may, at the earliest, date from the first century of the Christian era.

The Buddhist books do tell how Maro (Death) tried to terrify Buddha, endeavoured to lead him to desire immediate annihilation for himself, to

take a cheerful view of life, and so on. But one who studies these works will see that the resemblance between Christ's temptation and that of Buddha has been vastly exaggerated. There is a great deal of likeness between some Apocryphal Christian legends and the Buddhist ones contained in the *Lalita Vistara* and similar works, but of the latter, Professor Rhys Davids holds that we cannot positively assert that they existed* before the sixth century of the Christian era.

But Mr. Blatchford is not troubled by such trivial matters as dates, for elsewhere he tells us that certain "Jewish anticipations of Christian morals occur in the Talmud"! The unfortunate circumstance that the Talmud was not written until between 220 and 530 A.D. has not seemed to Mr. Blatchford worthy of notice: and so, also, with reference to Buddhist works.

As for the Golden Rule, there are approaches to it found in Plato and other writers, as well as in Buddhist books, but these are generally in the negative form, forbidding men to return evil for evil, rather than in the positive one which commands us to *do* unto others as we would that they should do unto us.

To prove this, as far as Buddhism is concerned, I quote the correct translation of only *one* of the passages which Mr. Blatchford brings forward: "Let us live happily, not hating those who hate us." It should be: "Very happily indeed we live, free from hate among the hating." The passage does occur in the Buddhist Scriptures, but it describes the happiness enjoyed by Buddhist monks, who did no work, and lived on other people's bounty. That this is so is clear from the very next verses in the "Dhammapada," where we read:

Very happily indeed we live, free from sickness among the sick; among sick men we dwell free from sickness. Very happily indeed we

live, inactive among the active; among active men we dwell free from activity.

There is very little of the Golden Rule here.

Mr. Blatchford inquires whether we can now find two men "as good as Socrates and Buddha," and he again and again lauds Buddha's purity and beneficence. Socrates lies outside our present subject, though Plato reveals some very unpleasant traits in his character. But Buddha's "purity" may be judged of by the fact that an early Buddhist work represents him as having had 40,000 wives. A later work raises the number to 87,000. This may not be historical, but we have to depend upon the statements of his disciples on the subject, and this is what they tell us.

It is true that they tell us that he abandoned his family and his little son (whom he named Râhulo, or "a hindrance") in order to become a monk. He spent his life in making men monks, until there arose a great outcry at the decrease in the population. He did not fight against caste, except that in the monkish community which he founded caste was not recognised. But few except members of the two highest castes were admitted to the order.

Prof. Oldenberg says:

I am not aware of any instance in which a *Candâlo*—the pariah of that age—is mentioned in the sacred writings as a member of the Order. For the lower order of the people, for those born to toil in manual labour, hardened by the struggle for existence, the announcement of the connection of misery with all forms of existence was not made. . . . For children and those who are like children the arms of Buddha are not opened.

And again:

To reach the humble and wretched, the sorrowing, who endured yet another sorrow than the great, uni-

versal sorrow of impermanence, was not the province of Buddhism.

Buddha's was a message to the rich, and not to the poor. His benevolence, according to Buddhist works, was abundantly shown *in previous states of existence*, for example when, being a monkey, he gave himself to a hungry crocodile to eat!

A gentleman who was arguing with me at a lecture on the subject said that he was sure Buddha had been beneficent, for he had read somewhere that he *had been kind to a calf!* The truth is, Buddha taught his followers that they should feel benevolence towards all beings, not be beneficent.

Buddhism does not enjoin on men the duty of comforting the sorrowful, helping the poor (unless they be monks), healing or tending the sick, or even performing one's ordinary duties towards one's parents or children—except in the case of lay adherents, who are not regarded as in any real sense Buddhists. The man who becomes a Buddhist has to burst all the ties which bind him to his fellows.

"We cannot refrain from thinking," says Prof. Oldenberg, "that the treatment of beneficence in Buddhist morals would have been more sound and less prolix, if it were not that here a virtue was being handled, in a position to practise which the pauper monk could hardly ever be."

King Asoka is such a favourite with Mr. Blatchford that he ventures to assert that he was as good as and wiser than Christ, and that he abolished slavery, inculcated spiritual religion, denounced war, and taught religious toleration. All this rests upon Mr. Blatchford's conviction that it was so, and that conviction is based upon the quotations he gives from Asoka's inscriptions.

We know nothing whatever historically about Asoka except from his own inscriptions. Of course, these *may* be truthful and reliable, in spite of the

proverb, "Self praise is no commendation." But, on the other hand, they may not.

We all know that Philip II. of Spain, husband of Queen Mary of England, was one of the very worst and cruellest tyrants that ever lived—witness his treatment of the Netherlands—yet, in his own writings, he says of himself that "from the beginning of his government he had always followed the path of clemency, according to his natural disposition, so well known to all the world."

Why should we accept Asoka's testimony to himself, and reject Philip's? "Because Philip was a Christian," Mr. Blatchford will reply. He has given us no definition of a Christian, but the reader of his book would naturally conclude that the word means, to Mr. Blatchford, one who breaks all Christ's commandments. This is not, however, Christ's definition.

Asoka may have been a good and a wise man, but he certainly did not suppress slavery, which continued in India until put down by Britain. He did not teach a "spiritual religion," for Buddhism denies the existence of any need for worship or belief in any higher Power that can in any way affect man. As for his denunciation of war, and establishment of toleration," his own edicts tell us that, *in the space of a little over a year*, during which he "exerted himself strenuously," he had put down the worship of "those gods who were considered to be true gods in India."

Mr. Blatchford does not believe in miracles, yet he assures us that all this was done "without coercion," and that "coercion" has never been employed by Buddhists! Is this not rather a tax upon our credulity?

Mr. Blatchford assures us that Buddhism "taught a religion of humanity," and "put it into practice," which he declares Christians have never done,

Assertion again. Buddha taught that it was wrong to kill a snake or a mosquito, it is true; yet the Sinhalese, who are mostly Buddhists, are reported by a Commissioner, who came some years ago to inquire into the criminal statistics of Ceylon, to stand first on the list of homicides, perhaps, in the world. The Buddhists of Japan issued a "Circular in Connection with the Chinese Emergency" in October, 1900, in which they regretfully acknowledge that the Chinese Buddhists had taken a leading part in the Boxer massacres.

These, however, are only *facts*: we cannot expect them to be accepted by persons who prefer theories.

We are told that Asoka established hospitals. Their nature is not stated, but we may hope they were not like a famous "hospital" at Rome in heathen times, where sick persons were brought and left to die untended when their relatives were tired of looking after them. At any rate, no true Buddhist *could* tend the sick: the work, if done at all, must have been done by lay adherents.

Once more, according to Mr. Blatchford: "Woman . . . was for the first time considered man's equal, and allowed to develop her spiritual life." But, unfortunately, Buddhism recognises no "spirit" at all in man or woman, so that there is something wrong in this statement. Besides this, the Buddhist Scriptures show that Buddha regarded woman as a snare. He at first had no room for women in his Order. He was with great difficulty persuaded to admit them, and then prophesied that, as a result, his law would be forgotten in 500 years. The status of the female "mendicant" or nun is far lower than that of the monk.

When Buddhism arose, women held a fairly high position in India, and enjoyed a considerable degree of liberty. Her position in most Buddhist lands to-day is far lower than it

was in India. There is nothing in all Buddha's teaching which in the slightest degree tends to elevate woman to her rightful position as man's helpmeet.

The fact is that Mr. Blatchford—if he will allow me to say so—has permitted himself to be misled by Lillie's specious plea for Buddhism, and, perhaps, by Sir Edwin Arnold's poetical romance on the subject, which is avowedly founded upon a late Sanskrit one. This is hardly what his readers have a right to expect from one who writes with so much zeal and confidence, and who must know that nowadays we are in a position to put to the test all statements made in reference to Buddha, since we have in hand such a large mass of Buddhist writings, which some of us have taken the trouble to study.

Mr. Blatchford falls into the customary error of estimating Buddhists at 400,000,000 or 450,000,000. The late Prof. Monier-Williams, after careful study of the subject, thought they could not exceed 100,000,000, even if all lay adherents were counted. But Buddhists would not admit these latter as members of the Order. To be a true Buddhist a man *must* be a yellow-robed monk, living by begging. Such were the early Buddhists.

However great their virtues, these are hardly the men to whom we are inclined to think that civilisation is as largely indebted as Mr. Blatchford would have us believe. On the contrary, "Everything tends to prove that Buddhism became extinct (in India) from sheer exhaustion, and that it is in its own inherent defects we must especially seek for the causes of its disappearance."

It was, as originally taught by Buddha, a pessimistic philosophy without God and without hope; it has now, in Ceylon, at least, become in large measure a system of demon-worship.

Buddha's great tenet was that all

existence is misery, and his great aim for himself and for all men was to cease to exist as soon as possible. He feared that in most cases death would not put an end to men's existence, and the whole object of his system was to make sure that it would in as many cases as possible.

And this is the system upon which (though no believer in Buddha) Mr. Blatchford lavishes so much praise! He must be easily pleased with anything but Christianity.

The pity of it all is that Mr. Blatchford's book is written with the fond hope of proving to men that Christianity is not true; that the highest hopes

of men are based upon a lie. Rejecting the truth, he credulously accepts the rashest possible statements about Buddha and Asoka in order to hold them up as superior to Christ.

Well, I have studied both Buddhism and Christianity with more than a little care, and I can honestly echo John Stuart Mill's opinion that the Gospel account of Christ's life must be true and historical, for no poet or dramatist ever lived who could have "imagined the life and character revealed in the Gospels."

Don't let us be like the dog in the fable, and reject the substance for the shadow.

CHRISTIANITY AND HISTORY

REV. R. MARTIN POPE, M.A.

HAS Christianity been a success?

Mr. Blatchford says No! History proves it to have been a failure.

It is desirable at the outset to affix a definite meaning to the word "success." We may rule out at once the materialistic ideas popularly associated with the word—organisation, wealth and numbers. That the Christian Church is a vast institution with ramifications extending to the uttermost parts of the earth, wealthy, powerful and progressive, and that the Christian population of the globe amounts to nearly 300,000,000 are facts altogether irrelevant to the question at issue. Even if the adherents of Buddha and Mohammed outnumbered those of Christ: what of that? Would Mr. Blatchford entrust the regeneration of London to Buddhism or Mohammedanism?

Let us put into the word "success" the only meaning which it will bear in relation to religion. The success or failure of a religion is determined by *its influence as a moral dynamic*. Does it tend to uplift humanity? Does it reform the individual character? Has it the power of transcending distinctions of language and race? Is it able to meet the spiritual hunger and thirst of the race, to satisfy the inner needs of our common humanity? Does it lift men to higher levels of thought and action by creating a conscience against every form of evil—individual, social, and national?

We may lay down another proposition. All religions are subject to the law of evolution. There again let us rule out material ideas. The material growth of a faith from small obscure beginnings to a position of commanding influence is no doubt an interesting and even important study from the historical point of view, but in religion

it is the evolution of moral and spiritual conceptions that matters: its *intension* rather than its *extension*. For example, from the standpoint of the moral well-being of the race, it was of much greater moment that in the Jewish nation the ideas of God and of morality advanced from imperfect and crude beginnings to ethical beauty and completeness, than that a nomad people, after many vicissitudes, rose to the position of a powerful nation.

The evolution of a religion is a slow process: it is slow in proportion to the forces which it has to overcome within and without. We may expect to find many an ebb and flow, rises and falls, periods of insight and purity, followed by periods of darkness and corruption. Sometimes the period of corruption appears to be a necessary preliminary to a new advance in moral intensity, or to a new conception of truth. Reversions to type, degenerations and lapses, renaissances and revivals, will mark its progress in history. In other words, religion will be modified by its environments, sometimes for good, at other times for ill. This is due to the fact that it is working out in human life, and that it has as its environment human wills.

When Christianity emerged in history, its advance was rapid, its victory complete. So much Mr. Blatchford admits, but he appears to discount his admission by emphasising the circumstances that favoured the growth of Christianity. He remarks that "the Roman Empire was ripe for a new religion."

If we look at the social and moral condition of society at the birth of Christ, that is undoubted. Matthew Arnold has vividly condensed the situation in his oft-quoted lines:

"On that hard Pagan world, disgust
And secret loathing fell :
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell."

Every one knows now, even if he does not read the contemporary authors, like Tacitus and Juvenal, that Rome was an inferno of unspeakable corruption. Stoicism, the philosophy of a few, was a gleam of brightness that could not dispel the all-pervading darkness. Half the population were slaves; no one worked who could help it; moral sanctions appeared to be dead; the ancient rites and festivals of the Roman religion were without significance; Religion was subject to the law of fashion; a new deity was as common as a new dish upon the table of a patrician epicure.

There is no need to dwell on this state of things except once more to note the marvel of history that a handful of men, inspired by the love of a Jew (hated race!) that had been crucified (a slave's death!), should have been the regenerators of their age. Everything seemed against them; but the fact remains, that the whole of the splendid fabric of Paganism crumbled before them, and in three centuries Christianity was the religion of the Empire.

That in so short a time Christianity should have breathed a new spirit into civilisation is a notable fact, but we demur to the statement that it conquered, because it "threw in its lot with the ruling powers." State-recognition was not so much a cause as an effect. Many who look back on history will echo Dante's famous words: "Ah! Constantine, to how much ill gave birth, not thy conversion, but that dower, which the first rich Father took from thee?"

It is more true to the facts to say that the ruling powers threw in their lot with Christianity. Christianity was now proved, after years of persecution, to have the seeds of immortal life in it. It could no longer be ignored by the State. It was one of the factors in the consolidation of the Empire.

Mr. Blatchford suggests, as another element in the progress of Christianity, that it "came with the tempting bribe of Heaven in one hand, and the withering threat of Hell in the other."

Naturally, the Christian objects to expressions like "bribe" and "threat." Christianity neither bribes nor threatens. But there is a sense in which Mr. Blatchford is right. The situation was so terrible that men of the type of Tertullian may be forgiven, and even a creed like the Athanasian may be defended for being stern and damnable. These were the offspring of an age that had been awakened to the horror of sin, and believed in a God that eternally abhorred evil. If ever the world needed the ideas of judgment and retribution it was in the early centuries of the Christian era. Christianity threw a new light on the future. The belief in a Personality Who had triumphed over death and was alive for evermore, revolutionised life. The doctrine of immortality laid hold of the consciousness of the Roman Empire, and is to be reckoned as an element in the swift advance of Christianity. It awoke in human nature the sense of an undying destiny. Nothing had so paralysed spiritual effort and produced the mad desperation of sensuality above referred to, as the thought of death's certainty and of nothing beyond. Listen to Catullus, the gayest of poets: "There awaits us all the unending night of sleep;" and are we surprised that Christ's proclamation of the eternal worth of a single soul and its immortal existence should have roused men from despair and given them a nobler view of life?

But Mr. Blatchford's crowning argument lies in his statement that Christianity "overcame opposition by murdering or cursing all who resisted its advance."

If this had been the prevailing spirit of Christianity, Christianity would have died long ago. No religion that resists new light and knowledge can live. We sadly acknowledge that the theo-

logians of the Church persecuted a Galileo and put to death a Giordano Bruno; and that there were ages when the Christian Church regarded heresy as worse than immorality, and when the ministers of Christ quelled opposition and freedom of thought by force. But such measures alienated the best thinkers of the day, and were violations of the real genius of Christianity.

Here, that law of evolution referred to above receives full illustration. The martyrdoms of science paved the way for salutary revolutions in thought, and led up to that calm and fearless tolerance of belief and that open-mindedness to truth which is one of the true notes of the Christian character. If the church of other days hated science, and science scorned the church, it is one of the brighter signs of our times that this mutual hostility is dying down, and that on both sides a hard and rigid dogmatism is deemed unworthy alike of religion and science in face of the unsolved mysteries of the universe.

I regard this as one of the many tokens that Christianity is only at the beginning of its task, and that through the ages "one increasing purpose" runs. It is a proof of the vitality of Christianity that it survives the misguided policy of other days, which stifled discussion and despised reason. It is another proof of its inexhaustible potentiality that no developments, either of criticism or of science, have weakened its message for the conscience of mankind or destroyed its fundamental truths.

It may not be out of place to point out here that from the first Christianity trampled on the selfish instincts of human nature. Christ's words, "Take up the Cross" are the keynotes of His ethics. The first claim Christ makes upon a man is to ask him to surrender his self-will, and all through its history Christianity has been combating the selfishness that is the root evil of humanity, and making extraordinary demands on human nature. The spirit has been arrayed against the flesh. If

the flesh has often prevailed in the type of Christian character presented by given ages to the world, that is an eloquent testimony to the greatness of the Christian ideal.

Let us clear out of the way that *petitio principii*, that colossal begging of the question which dominates Mr. Blatchford's arguments. He offers not one jot of evidence that the corruptions of the Church are due to Christianity. He assumes what he nowhere proves, that the martyrdoms, cruelties, burnings alive, red-hot pincers, etc., are the direct effects of Christianity! We reply that they are nothing of the sort. They flow from that radical selfishness, which Christ came into the world to crucify. That through great stretches of history, alike in the lives of individuals and communities, there was a failure to incarnate Christ's love and tenderness, is a condemnation of human nature and not of Christianity. Such sins are no more to be laid to the door of Christianity than sweated labour is to be pronounced a product of Socialism, which is eager to put it down. If evils have accompanied the progress of the Christian Church through the centuries, it is a proof of the persistence of the spirit which Christ came to destroy, of the magnitude of the Church's task, and of the truth that "the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation."

Mr. Blatchford is on safer ground when he mentions other factors in the success of Christianity—the stories of the Nativity and the divine childhood of Jesus—"the gospel of mercy and atonement, of universal brotherhood and peace among the earthly children of the Heavenly Father, whose attribute was love."

But why does he go on to assert that the "lovely natures which accepted this creed assimilated from the chaotic welter of beauty and ashes called the Christian religion all that was pure and rejected all that was foul?"

There is nothing foul in the Christian religion, and I defy Mr. Blatchford

to point it out. When he proceeds to praise the achievements of Joan of Arc and Francis of Assisi, and to commend Milton, Thomas á Kempis and others, for what they did for Christianity, I think he might have acknowledged that these individuals would not have been but for Christianity. But I thank him for the admission that "there are good men and good women by millions in the ranks of Christians to-day," and that "Christianity has been for fifteen hundred years the religion of the brilliant, brave, and strenuous races in the world." Mr. Blatchford will forgive me for remarking that this is not a bad record for "a chaotic welter of beauty and ashes!"

It is, however, urged that Christianity—and this after all is the vital point—has yielded nothing but leaves. Does any person in his senses, does anyone who is not blinded by prejudice, really believe that the results of Christianity have been purely negative? Has it done nothing for the betterment of the race? To urge that Christianity is not the rule of life for masses of people in America and Europe is not to affix discredit to Christianity, but is a statement of the difficulty and extent of its task. To hint that London and Paris are not centres of holiness, of sweetness, and of light, and that there is much moral wreckage in the world from Glasgow to Johannesburg, is to condemn humanity and *not* the religion, which alone can save it.

Does Christianity yield nothing but leaves? What of the care of the body, the ennobled status of womanhood, the abolition of slavery, the purification of domestic life, the growing sense of the solidarity and brotherhood of the race, the quickened horror of warfare, the awakening of the public conscience to the injustices and vast evils of the social order? Who can tabulate the multitudinous, noble effects of the religion of Christ? Are the Christian centuries a long reign of cruelty and obscurantism? What other religion can produce such a roll-call of saints,

heroes, and reformers? Was nothing achieved by Paul Augustine, Bernard, Francis of Assisi, Wyclif, Luther, Wesley, Howard, and Wilberforce, to mention no names of our own day? Is American and European society absolutely rotten to-day?

Every serious Christian will admit that there are many features in modern life which can only be viewed with shame and deep foreboding. They have been so often and eloquently described in the pages of the *Clarion*, that I need not dwell upon them—the ghastly social inequalities, the rampant mammonism that exists side by side with grinding pauperism, all the sweltering sin, misery, and tragedy of city life. There is, however, one huge difference between the Roman Empire at the birth of Christ and the British Empire in the twentieth century. In those days there was no collective consciousness of sin; it had yet to be created. But what of to-day? Throughout the community, in Press and in pulpit, from the Christian Church and from the Christian multitudes outside the Church, from the ranks of the ethical agnostics, from thousands of so-called "infidels," there arises an accumulating and united feeling against the evils of modern life. Throughout society, there is diffused a collective yearning after a better order of things. A fierce ethical light beats on the squalid facts of life.

What is the origin of this collective consciousness, of the ever-widening and deepening altruism of society? Can anyone doubt it, who compares the Western and Eastern worlds? It is due to Christianity; and it is one among myriad proofs that He, Whom Christendom still believes to be the Light of the World, is illuminating the souls of humanity, and is the one hope of the brighter day which we all long to see.

If Christianity is abandoned, where is salvation for humanity to be looked for? Judging by moral results, there is no rival in history to Christianity. One looks in vain for a substitute in the pages of *God and My Neighbour*.

VI

CHRISTIANITY AND ATHEISM

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

PERCY REDFERN, MANCHESTER

ROBERT BLATCHFORD has asked those of his readers who are Christians to say what they believe, and to state the reasons they have for believing. This I will do, the more gladly because from sixteen down to nine years ago I was an Atheist. For two years I was a member of the National Secular Society, and upon one occasion contributed an article to the *Freethinker*, ridiculing the "Prince of Peace." From that position, by reason and experience, I have been led, step by step, to a Christian faith.

I believe in "God, our Heavenly Father."

That is to say, I am neither a Pantheist nor a Deist: my faith is in the Spirit whom Jesus loved, the God of whom St. Paul said that in Him we live and move and have our being. To believe in any other is impossible; as it is impossible not to believe in Him. That assertion is not too strong. "Half the controversies in the world," says Newman, "are verbal ones; and could they be brought to a plain issue, they would be brought to a prompt termination. . . . When men understand each other's meaning, they see, for the most part, that controversy is either superfluous or hopeless."¹ My meaning will show at its clearest if I tell (so far as one can outline in a few paragraphs the growth of years) how God compelled me to believe in Him.

¹ *Oxford University Sermons*, Sermon X.

It was in my thirteenth year that I first called myself an Atheist. I had been reading the late R. A. Proctor's popular books on astronomy: they had stirred my imagination; so that when I walked alone at night and looked on the silent assembly of the stars I felt the sublimity of the idea of the boundlessness of space. Then I began to question what I had learnt concerning God and Christ. How could the maker of the infinite, if such there were, walk and speak on earth? And, if in space there were other worlds inhabited, as I believed,—had they also fallen, and did Christ go from star to star? This slight reasoning seemed conclusive.

Five years later, hearing of the Secularists—from *We Two*—and joining their body, I adopted fresh arguments against religion. God was impotent: a French writer had called Him "that recluse of the skies." Men suffered and prayed to Him for help; and even whilst they knelt the lightning struck their churches. Let us then, said I, turn from this God, this shadow of our own minds, and look for help in our fellow-creatures. And I believed it necessary for our well-being that we should lose faith in God, and rely, instead, upon ourselves.

And now the sufferings of men, especially the unjust sufferings of the toiling poor, began really to appeal to me. I asked how they arose, and the answer which then satisfied me was, from an ignorant

struggle for the means of life. And in the future, I learnt to believe, that struggle would be ended by Socialism. This quieted me, giving room for aspiration, until I asked myself, "but what of the sufferings of animals? What of the present sufferings of men? And how would it be possible for men to enjoy the happy state of the future when they remembered the unrequited miseries endured in its making?"

So happiness was impossible,—such was the result of that law of nature which enforced the struggle for existence. Therefore I hated nature for her cruelty. I would not be seduced into adding to or prolonging life: of what *is*, I said, let us make the best, but after that let us sleep and forget. Then the *Light of Asia* half caused me to believe in an eternity of purely intellectual, impersonal yet conscious, existence, apart from all matter; and so I became a kind of Buddhist.

Yet, during the whole of the time that nature repelled me by her cruelty, she never ceased to attract me by her freshness and beauty. More and more ardently I worshipped the loveliness that was in the tree, the glory that suffused the clouds. But how reconcile these with the agony of her hunted creatures?

I could not answer the Sphinx, and I sat down before her; now an Epicurean, and now a Buddhist, yet ever contemplating with calm (so far as the mind was concerned) the day when I should be devoured.

Such was the state of my mind; but the mind was not my whole being. I had to live; I could not live without taking some interest in the general movements of my life: in other words, for practical purposes I was a Humanist. Hence followed the propaganda of political Socialism, the advocacy of trades-unionism. But these led me into practical opposition to lovers of literature and art for their own sakes. Once again the riddle,—under which

Bernard Shaw commended Tolstoy's

What is Art? and, caring nothing for Tolstoy, that book I read. Unexpectedly, I found help. Delight in beauty, said Tolstoy, is simply a pleasure, and the object of life is neither pleasure nor pain, but the increase of love—brotherhood. Here, then, was something that went to the root of things. Life had a purpose, and all things were good or bad in so far as they served or hindered it; and that purpose was the attainment of the very brotherhood which reason approved and the heart loved. The question of purpose of art was thus absorbed by the larger one; and so I went on to read *The Christian Teaching*.

Then, indeed, came new light. The contradiction which you see is real, said Tolstoy, *but it is not in the universe; it is in yourself. You are conscious of suffering and death only because of a growing feeling of love within you; if it were not for this you would suffer without knowing it: as it is you are taught to emerge from the animal life of struggle into the self-sacrificing life of love, in which lies your immortal development.* And you can only know visible things as they appear to you in relation to that development; what they are in themselves absolutely, you cannot know; albeit you do know the absolute (God, the source of life) in yourself, in your mind as reason, and in your heart as love. Serve that God.

O hard truth! the universe was not wrong; the wrong was in myself, in my own attitude. I had tried to play the master; but in truth I was a servant, and all I possessed had been given me, and given for a purpose—to do actual good to living men. Not in a grandiose way to mere abstractions like "humanity" or "the nation," but really, to the actual people about me, so that their characters became the better for my life. From this point of view my old objections to religion were either childish or beside the mark. The insoluble problems disappeared: their place was taken by others which

solved themselves in so far as I strove to live in accord with the Sermon on the Mount. The universe did not change; I alone changed; yet for me all was then changed: nor was the alteration due to myself; from God, through Christ, and from him through Tolstoy, had come the truth that changed me.

Yet, so far, it was a mere mental revolution; and even the mind did not yield readily. Nietzsche had also solved this contradiction between the apparent cruelties of the struggle for existence and the desire of the heart. But how? By declaring for the struggle, which has to prepare the super-man, and must therefore be relentless: by denying love, in its sympathetic and self-sacrificing nature, calling it the offspring of an effeminate civilisation, a weakness begotten by fear.

Was this true? Its logic appealed to the mind: its heartlessness fascinated the intellect, which, in its pride, ever desires to throw off the dominion of the heart. But common sense, common experience, every-day life quietly set aside the madness of Zarathustra.

Besides, who was the super-man? I, who had ridiculed the "Prince of Peace" had, and have, only one answer. Tolstoy's teaching had been derived from Jesus, and having just that natural sense which enables one not to spit upon one's benefactor, when I found Jesus helping me I put old enmity aside, and began to study His life. Who is the super-man? Let anyone, if he can, read the gospels without prejudice, estimate, further, the influence of Christ in the lives of the saints, and then see if his heart and soul do not answer "Jesus Christ, He who loved God and man as none had done before or since." Jesus Christ, that One whose ceaseless influence, infinitely above that of the whole Empire under which He was crucified, is a phenomenon so inexplicable by materialism. So it was proved to me

that love is not a weakness, but the conquering power. God is love.

I went back again to Tolstoy. Again the Christian message was repeated. "Life is not yours, it is something given you. You cry out against cruelty; how got you the power to cry? How the consciousness of cruelty, and of not-cruelty? All these things are given you, that you may grow as He wills. Therefore, do your task, strive against wrong, overcoming evil with good, so live that love may flow into you from the source of all life. In all else you will fail, since for nothing else are you fitted."

I was not yet humbled, but humble and true ideas had replaced in my mind proud and ignorant ideas. Nevertheless, there remained within me a citadel of the devil. It was egotism which, unknown to me, had hitherto been dominating my mind and prompting my feelings. In obedience to this egotism, which though refined and "humanitarian" was none the less vile, I had turned my back upon the light, and then complained that all was dark: had demanded the most refined enjoyment, social, literary, artistic, and condemned the universe because it contained sin and pain and death. This same egotism now caused me to weave new religious and social theories, based indeed on God and the Soul's development, yet brain-spun, and therefore pantheistic in the one case, and impracticable in the other; and all exalting the part which I had to play in the world.

However, life has gone forward. God having entered my mind I had but to be sincere and the conquest of the heart was sure. I am learning to know my ignorance the better, to know my weakness and constant liability to sin and error, to know the sources of strength: I am learning, very slowly, the deep meanings of "faith" and "love" and the profound reality of the personal in God and man. It is like a man who has sincerely married

for better or worse. At first he may love his wife for his own sake, because in her he finds the increase of his being. Then come sacrifices, trials, mutual sufferings, revelations of the depths of character,—and for the first time, as it seems, he learns what love means. So when the soul has taken God to itself, since without God it is nothing, and afterwards has been constrained to sacrifice and suffering, God sufficing,—then (with many a backward slip) it begins to enter into what is deeper than word or thought.

Thus, theoretically, I believe in God because I agree with Robert Blatchford in saying, "Man did not make himself." And I ask, who or what has made him? The reply of *God and My Neighbour* is: "Heredity gives him his nature." Then a man's love of truth and of right, and his power of saying, "I did this, and I am responsible," have all come from his ancestors. But—his ancestors also did not make themselves. Then from whom or what did they obtain love, and reason, and personal consciousness? Mr. Blatchford could only reply, "From some lower kind of animal." And that, I suppose, gained our higher nature from a fish, and the fish from a plant, and the plant from earth and sunshine, and these from pure matter and force.

I do not believe it. Between a man and a brick there is a gulf which the explanation does not bridge. Imagine the Flying Scotchman at full steam—and without a driver! That would be matter and force. Yet the Blatchfordian doctrine of heredity would lead you to suppose that man is the offspring of matter. I do not believe that the electric current which a car driver can switch on or off as he chooses has somewhere tucked away with it the soul of a Socrates.

Mr. Blatchford has told us of the flying fish which leap out of the water to escape an enemy, and in the telling he betrays that feeling which is deeply

opposed to the life of animal warfare. Omar Khayyám shares the same feeling:

"Ah love ! could you and I with Him conspire,
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the heart's desire !"

You see, we not only sit apart from the Universe, but judge it, and, from our point of view, call it a sorry scheme. Certainly, that Universe has not made us. But Mr. Blatchford is right: man did not make himself. Then whence am I?

Only one answer remains, that which I have given. Our life has a source, and that source is one. Moreover that source, though it may be more, cannot be less than my highest conception of life, since the best I have is of Him. And life, in its reality and at its highest, is a loving person. Infinitely above me, He is yet within me; and I, who am dependent on Him for all my good, who have from Him the free gift of life fraught with love and the promise of perfection, cannot help but render Him adoration.

Practically, therefore, I believe in God because my heart, freed from the shadow of ignorant egotism, has begun to respond to Him like a flower to the sunshine, and love Him, pray for Him, rest in him. I am like a child who is the son of an absolute monarch, yet to whom the mighty ruler is simply a tender human father. And the word "Father" is inadequate; for "He" includes all that can be contained in motherhood. He is the one who comprehends all good; and His will is that by prayer and aspiration and love, and thought and deed, we should draw still nearer to Himself, and, therefore, to one another.

But, says the Agnostic, what of the existence of evil? Well, in the first place, let us search for the facts, and not be affrighted by bogies. What is evil? The contrary of good. And what is good? Life. Evil, then, is that which absolutely destroys life.

And of nothing of the kind have we knowledge. Let the Agnostic take a case that appears to tell entirely in his own favour—that of the recent steam-boat fire in New York Harbour. Did it absolutely destroy life? It destroyed bodies, but life, as we feel it within, is less in the body than in the soul, in the *character*. And since character is not created by fire or water, can it thereby be destroyed? If not, then no evil appears in the fire, but, so far, only a neutral action. Beyond this, however, the fire had a passive influence as environment. In its glare, some made us pity and fear their panic, and others encouraged us by their heroism. Sympathy was evoked, ignorance revealed, men were made to feel their weakness and their strength. How then can that be evil which so furthers the development of life?

Ah, but the pain, the agonies! Yes, we may quail at the sight of screaming children and distraught mothers, but logic is relentless—and kind. If pleasure is not the object of life neither is pain its end, hence again there is no absolute evil. Besides, bodily pain is always limited in extent and intensity. Though in the mass it appals, yet it is not suffered in the mass but individually, and in most cases means nothing worse than any intense neuralgia. Beyond that consciousness ceases. (Which does not mean that the individual ceases: consciousness is simply an activity of our being, whose real essence is in character.) Again, few things in the world are so powerful for good as pain, once it is accepted as a teacher, and its meaning is understood. So faced it at once loses all its real terror.

But if enjoyment be our aim then with a voice of thunder, earthquake and cancer fling back the answer, "Thou fool!"

To men like Omar Khayyám, this is terrible, not to be heard—and their hands reach out for the wine-cup. The nobler Stoic seeks refuge in endurance; the Buddhist in sad pity. Christ alone

solves the problem. As the Tower of Siloam falls, He says in effect, do not put your faith in this visible life of the body; trust in the imperishable life of the soul, in love.

Thus comes about that greatest of miracles—women and men giving up, for the sake of God and His children, all that the world thinks delightful, and yet having their hearts filled with the deepest and purest happiness—life welling up where the world can see no life?

I Believe in "Free Will."

If my will were material, like my blood, I should be chiefly governed by external law; and if I look at a man from the outside, he appears as if he were so governed. And if I knew men only from the outside, I should certainly agree with Mr. Blatchford.

But it happens that one man—and one man only—I know *from within*. And in myself I find an ability voluntarily to decide my conduct. Having this faculty, I have also a sense of responsibility, the possession of which makes me more of a man; and because I, and not any "Dutchman on deck," am responsible for my conduct, I am capable of shame and remorse.

I Believe in "Sin against God."

The Determinist is like the Sadducee—he "knows not the power of God." Incapable himself of endowing a creature with will, he thinks of God under the same limitations. All the logic which triumphantly proves that man cannot sin against God loses its power the moment one understands the difference between a will, say, and a watch-spring.

By the gift of personality and will God makes us like Himself. It is true He leaves us still quite dependent on Him. I did not choose my sex, nor the place or time of my birth. To choose those was not my business. But whether, say, I become lustful (and to us men lust is a real evil) or pure in heart (and to us chastity is a

real good) that is my business, and for that I am equipped.

Says Mr. Blatchford, however, "Suppose God has given you a weak will?" I wish the author of *God and My Neighbour* would deal with fact, and not with imaginations. Neither he nor I can say whether the will of Adam or of our neighbour is "strong" or "weak." Strong or weak in relation to what? Surely the special personal problems of Adam's or our neighbour's life. But, again, it happens that neither of us can fully understand those problems.

The only soul which you can unerringly read is your own. And what do you find there? I will tell you what I find in mine—no evidence of anything "weak" or "strong," but simply of a *will sufficient to meet the demands arising from the particular circumstances of my necessarily separate and individual life*. God has set me no task greater than He has given me power to accomplish. He does not ask me to be a Loyola or a Wesley, but to be faithful in little things. When I am unfaithful, I sin. And the possibilities of sin are almost endless—lust, and greed, and pride, and sloth, and cruelty, and all the things that are contrary to pure love—for God is love.

And now a word on original sin. Sin itself concerns our life so closely that we should take pains to know exactly what it is, and how to escape from it. But the question of how sin first came into the world is less vital. Still, I would like to point out that the assumption of the Fall and original sin is not less reasonable than the presumption of the evolutionist.

It is claimed that man has "risen" from a lower form of life, thereby fulfilling a natural destiny. In that case there should be visible a single, unhesitating perfect process, like the opening of a flower, or the physical growth of a child. On the contrary, history shows something like the

muddled action of a drunkard, who staggers to his feet only because he is a little less drunk than before.

And see what appears in human nature itself. Feeling ourselves born to life and love and truth, with the same consciousness, we are aware of death and selfishness and error; nor can we abandon the wrong and cling to the right, for, even while we want the best, we descend to the worst, and even at our worst, with increased longing we turn again to the good. Is it, then, so absurd to say that we were born for the perfection of innocence; that we chose, instead, knowledge of good and evil; that, through endless sacrifices of His dearest sons, God is lifting us to the higher perfection—which includes knowledge of good and evil? And, if it is absurd, what shall we say of the Agnostic evolutionary teaching, which teaches a glorious progress ending in this—the knowledge that the individual is of no account except to serve a transient society, transmit his bodily life to another mortal being, and then feed the earth with his bones, so allowing his meaningless being to reach its proper end in nothingness?

I believe in "Salvation." Richard Jefferies, in the *Story of My Heart*, speaks of a legacy received from our ancestors—"diseases crossed and cultivated." Sin is such a disease. Sensuality, fear, avarice, tyranny, uncharitableness—not only are we initiated into such evils by our parents and teachers, but, as we grow up and mix with the world, deceived by that chief of all sins, the prime evil of egotism, veiling itself in a thousand seductive forms, we are laid hold of with enormous force by the legion of devils—temptation to idleness, to love of bodily comfort and pleasure, to participation in the fruits of injustice, to indifference to wrong-doing, to brutality, cowardice, and untruthfulness.

To free us from all this, and thus unite us to God, was the especial mission of Jesus. And, whilst the world is continually bidding us gloss our sins over, become "respectable," Jesus calls to repentance, for the self-satisfied are dead, and true life is reached only through grief, humility, and the sense of need.

How deep this repentance may be let the writings of the great Christians, from St. Paul and St. Augustine to Tolstoy, bear witness. And whence has come the good in your character and mine—from flattery and self-esteem, or from our being profoundly out of conceit with ourselves? Yet this essential of true culture, *God and My Neighbour* would destroy. For without God man knows nothing better than himself; he is the pinnacle of evolution; he may err, but he cannot sin, and even for errors he is not blameworthy. And if he praises his fellows it becomes self-laudation, for he simply praises the species of which he is one. So we need a belief in God, if only to correct our own follies; and we need a "conviction of sin," if only to escape from worship of our pitiful achievements. And, once this conviction is rationally attained for the earnest soul, Salvation surely follows. But it is a matter of life-long effort, and of many "convictions" and "conversions." "He that perseveres to the end, the same shall be saved."

I Believe in "Hell."

Worldly life, as Jesus showed, tends to bring disappointment and disillusionment, if nothing worse. Such sorrows are warnings to "turn again." If we reject them, and rebel against life because it does not turn out as *we* would have it, without a doubt we enter into Hell. We are like recruits in the awkward squad; God is the drill sergeant, and it rests with us as to whether we accept the drill or hate it. The state of living in opposition to the demands of true life—that is the

real Hell, of which Gehenna is an even inadequate picture.

"But," you may say, "Christ pictured Hell as a place of punishment for unbelief." That is true. But the "unbelief" is not the rejection of a theology which did not exist when Christ spoke; it is unbelief in the principles of life. Every sin, except one, shall be forgiven—even sin against the Son of Man. The only unpardonable sin is against the Holy Spirit. And the "Holy Spirit" I understand to be the spirit of love in its highest sense. Now, that is really the principle of life; and if we reject life, what can there be? Every place we are in will be a place of suffering, and if we numb ourselves to suffering, all that can follow is death.

Thus I believe in Hell, taking the stories and pictures of Jesus as illustrations of human experience, and not as ecclesiastical dogmas.

I Believe in eternal life and "heaven."

By the word "death," used above, I mean final extinction. Bodily death is a natural and proper process, which is beyond our control, though it may be turned to our spiritual good. Real death is that of which we should be in danger if we became loveless and unlovable. But, as Tolstoy shows in *The Death of Ivan Illyitch*, let the heart at any moment sincerely confess its own error and wretchedness, and there comes a promise of salvation. Then may begin the new life. And that life, as it is faithful to love and inspires love, knows no death: for it is not governed by the laws of time and space. This is easily proved. Consider, for instance, a man's love of truth, or the love in a mother. These are facts. Yet what length, breadth, depth have they? What colour or odour, what weight or specific gravity? How will you measure their force, in volts or horse power? Such realities are independent of death.

Again, love and life go together.

The heart demands immortality, and if the mind refuses the belief there is torment. But that mind which has learnt to trust in the invisible does not refuse.

I Believe that the truths of Christianity are essential.

One of the many superstitions of Rationalism is the supposition that anything true is not only good, but good for man to know. You may discover that Jupiter has another moon ; but it is really of no consequence, and in all probability you would have better spent your time in digging potatoes. Or you may prove beyond doubt that a dog's heart will beat faster if a certain nerve is laid bare and twitched—and just as certainly prove that you are simply doing mischief. One has not only to ask, Is this true? but, Is it essential that I should know it?

Rationalists say that science will be our salvation. From what we are to be saved they are not all agreed. Let us see how it works out. St. Francis, for instance, possibly believed the earth was flat, and, had he drawn a map of it, might have filled in the corners with dragons. Mr. Whittaker Wright, however, knew the proper

shape of the earth, and how to get to America and its silver mines ; and he would not have been satisfied with a dragon-adorned map, even for the Directors of the London and Globe. Which of the two knew the truths which are essential?

As Pascal says, there is something as much above the intellectual as that is above the physical, and this is love. And when we learn to share Jesus' faith in love, and, with His simplicity and directness, learn to obey His "new commandment," and love one another, then, and only then, will cease those real evils which consist, not in mere physical horror and death, but in our false ideas, and unholy feelings,—above all in that egotism which prompts women to rivalry in vanity, to jealousy, to mean intrigues for personal ends, and drives men to oppress others less fortunate, and struggle covertly in "business" and "politics," and openly in war. For our sins will only "be forgiven" when we "love much." But without love, with its meekness and faith, no social condition, however productive materially, can be aught but a tyranny of goods and chattels, laws and police.

VII

ON LEARNING TO BELIEVE

- I.—THE ROAD TO FAITH. *George W. E. Russell*
II.—GROWTH OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF *Dr. Fry*
III.—WHY I BELIEVE IN CHRISTIANITY *G. K. Chesterton*
IV.—POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS OF FAITH AND PRAYER . . *George Hawth*

ON LEARNING TO BELIEVE

I.—THE ROAD TO FAITH

GEORGE W. E. RUSSELL

"Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound, nor doubt Him, nor
deny:
Yea, with one voice, O world, tho' thou
deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I."
F. W. H. Myers.

As a rule, I greatly dread "apologetic" literature. When we set out to defend the Christian religion, it is specially perilous to mistake intuition for proof, analogy for demonstration, or even the highest degree of probability for certitude. We must remember that "Truth emerges more readily from error than from confusion."

To my own mind, the difficulty of disbelieving the existence of God is much greater than the difficulty of believing it; but I do not think that we can prove it. And it is where we cannot prove that faith comes into play.

Archbishop Benson, a sturdy Christian if ever there was one, happily said that "Nature suspects the conscious God she cannot prove."

My own honoured master, the Bishop of Lincoln, says: "It is not in our power by the mere force of logic to arrive with perfect satisfaction at the conclusion—*God is*. The subject is too great for such a method." And, again: "For myself, the conclusion from such reasoning has rather been—*God must be* than *God is*; and thus the result of the purely logical argument, if satisfactory to the intellect, still falls short of the perfect satisfaction which is desired."

Here I seem to find an echo of St. Ambrose, a glorious Doctor of the Catholic Church, who says: "Non in dialectica complacuit Deo saluum

facere populum Suum"—"It is not by logic that God has thought fit to save His people."

Personally, I have no sympathy with the hectoring and imperious methods of what the late Mr. R. H. Hutton called, "The Hard Church." With reference to controversialists of this school, however admirable their intention, I make Mr. Hutton's words my own. "When I read these books of small, confident logic on subjects so high as to task our nature to the full, I sometimes ask: 'Is not scepticism the next stage in the education of such confidence as this? Is it not likely that such thinkers must pass through some discipline in the blinding night—some groping, some "feeling after" God, to teach them that He proves His own presence, and is not amenable to their small proofs—before they can gain any permanent hold of these great spiritual realities?'"

In these mysterious regions the poets are better guides than the logicians. Wordsworth spoke of—

"Blank misgivings of a creature,
Moving about in worlds not realised,"

and, sooner or later, most of us have to feel what the poet meant. Those misgivings, once felt, must be faced, and probed, and weighed, and tested, before we can pass into the light and peace and confidence of Faith.

When I speak of "Faith," I mean nothing less than faith in the entire truth of God, revealed to man by Him Who is both God and Man, the Lord Jesus Christ—in two words, "The Gospel."

Blank misgivings. I believe that there are some happy "creatures" who never feel them, and are never conscious of "moving about in worlds not realised." They have, from childhood up, the blessing of an intuitive faith. These happy souls do not fall within the scope of this article. But it has been suggested to me that it might possibly be useful to some readers if I described in a simple way what has seemed to me, after much observation, to be the ordinary course of conviction, or "Road to Faith," for the great majority of English people.

We are taught, from the very beginnings of consciousness, to believe what for shortness' sake I have called "The Gospel"—that is, that there is a God, and that He sees us; that He has given rules of life, which we ought to observe; that we often break them, and that this breaking is called "Sin"; that God's Son became man, and died for us on the Cross to deliver us from sin and its consequences; and that, if we believe in Him and rely on His work for us, and in us, we shall pass through bodily death into an everlasting life of holiness and joy.

Broadly speaking, I believe that most of us learn this Gospel as soon as we can learn anything. We learn it from parents, or elder relations, or clergymen, or teachers. *We do not discover it for ourselves.* The number of people who have discovered "The Gospel" for themselves by reading the Bible, without aid from man, is extremely small. For my own part, I have never known more than one such case, and he was a Jew who discovered the Christian doctrine of the Atonement by studying the Jewish Law of Sacrifice.

Here we see the effect of the Christian tradition. "The Church is older than the oldest of her documents, and from father to son, all through the centuries, she has passed on the message" (J. A. Robinson, Dean of Westminster). From father to son, from mother to child, from teacher to pupil, the Christian Gospel has been handed down; and

the great majority of us pass through childhood believing it implicitly.

We begin to grow up. We reach the stage of inquiry at very different ages. Some, as we have just said, never reach it at all, and perhaps—though not certainly—theirs is the happiest lot. The rest of us reach it, but at very different ages, and with very different results. Sooner or later, we begin to ask ourselves: "Are these things, which I have been taught, true?" The answer is arrived at by processes which vary enormously with various temperaments. To some temperaments it seems difficult—almost impossible—to realise anything which is not cognisable by the organs of sense. Such people naturally feel themselves unable to believe in the existence of God or of a future life. Let us, who are Christians, be careful not to bully or scold them. No opinion, as such, is culpable, so long as the man has used his best powers and opportunities to arrive at the truth. What is culpable is carelessness, intellectual levity, and the Dogmatism of Negation. If a man is really a good Agnostic—if he only says, "I do not know these things"—he is half-way on the Road to Faith. If he says that they cannot be known, he goes beyond what he has any right to say. Still more, if he says that they are not true—that there is no God and no future life—he puts himself out of court, for he affirms what he cannot prove.

But, according to my experience, the people who have this special difficulty in believing are quite as exceptional as those who have never felt a misgiving. Much more numerous are the people who disbelieve, or say they disbelieve, because they are too mentally indolent to examine the grounds of Faith. There is another class, not, I fear, very exceptional. These are they who say—not openly, but in their own hearts—"If the Gospel is true, I ought to be a better man. I ought to give up some sin, secret or open, which is to me the pleasantest thing in the world. I can't

and won't part with it. Therefore I will deny the Faith which, if it were true, would remorselessly condemn me."

I turn now to what I believe to be the usual "Road to Faith." Something—it does not matter what—has started the misgivings. We have begun to question. Is the Christian religion true? This question cannot be held in suspense all our life long—the issues which hang on it are too momentous for that. So we begin to consider our answer. Very often the answer shapes itself in some such form as this: "I have been taught the Christian religion by others, who believed it, who acted on it, who were not knaves or fools, who would never have deceived me wilfully, and whom, in the concerns of this life, I have found wise and helpful guides. I certainly can't prove it to myself by any process of logic, but nobody can disprove it. It is not antecedently incredible. It has a great deal to say for itself, morally, intellectually, historically. I see many reasons which incline me to believe it; I see none which compel me to disbelieve it. *Then I will believe it, and will act accordingly.* I will make the Venture of Faith, and will see what comes of it."

I have italicised the words above because the gist of the matter is here. Belief, or Faith, in the Christian sense, is not the mere assent of the intellect to a proposition. It is not the acceptance of what is demonstrable. To admit that the whole is more than the part, or that any two sides of a triangle are together greater than the third side, or that two plus two equals four, or that fire burns and ice is cold, is not to exercise faith; it is only to affirm the obvious. To deny those propositions is not infidelity; it is imbecility.

Vastly different is the nature of Faith. *Faith is an act of the will.* It involves, not merely "I will believe this"—that would be an unfinished sentence, an incomplete resolution—it involves the words which I italicised before: "*I will act accordingly.*" In

the Christian religion believing is never divorced from acting. What we do not practise we do not believe. So he who, after facing his misgivings, resolves to make the venture of Faith, resolves not only to accept the Christian Creed, but to *live the Christian life.*

And here the test of experience comes in. He who resolves to live the Christian life must live in direct, habitual, realised relation with the Lord Jesus Christ. He must believe in Him, love Him, trust Him, worship Him. He must speak to Him in prayer and sacrament, begging of Him, pleading with Him, asking real requests for real favours, real pardon for real sins, real help against real temptations. And thus the man who leads the Christian life obtains *experience*, and experience is a reality against which argument is powerless. When a man knows that, through intercourse with the Lord, he has been delivered from impurity or drunkenness; has been enabled to control a violent temper; has learnt to forgive injuries, and love his neighbour as himself; he cannot be persuaded that the power which has wrought such changes in him is an exploded tradition or the creation of a morbid fancy. He says, with the assurance of personal conviction: "I know Whom I have believed"; and he can no more distrust the Regenerator of his life than he can doubt his mother's love or the loyalty of his closest friend. At the same time, he would be quite unable to *prove* either that love or that loyalty, to a sceptical inquirer. In this spirit, that great genius, J. H. Newman, said of his own conversion: "I am more certain of it than that I have hands and feet."

And so, as years go by, the man who leads the Christian life becomes more and more persuaded of the truth which he believes. He clings more and more closely to what Matthew Arnold called St. Paul's "incomparable definition of the great Christian virtue of Faith"—*the substance of things hoped*

for, the evidence of things not seen. All through his earthly journey he realises that he is walking by Faith, and not by sight—that he is guided by an inward light, not by logical demonstration or by the organs of sense. And he looks forward with sure trust and hope to that further stage of his experience when Faith will be merged into sight—even the Vision of God.

Rightly has the enlightened heart of the Christian community from the beginning discerned that the Vision of God is the supreme object of human quest and the everlasting consummation of human blessedness. For to "see God" is to fear Him, to love Him, to worship Him, and to serve Him; and to do these things perfectly is Heaven.

II.—THE GROWTH OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF

DR. T. C. FRY

I SUPPOSE that most men have had to fight for their faith: fight, I mean, with themselves over it. I do not see why all men should. A child, well taught through a boyhood, well taught, may grow into a man who believes still in his old faith. By "well taught" I mean "wisely taught"; the young mind wisely guided as difficulties come; even by degrees led to difficulties; never snubbed or driven in, but sympathised with, till childhood broadens into a manhood capable of being a bit patient. But that is not the lot of most. I have tried to make it the lot of any young people, sons or others' sons, that I have had near me. I hope I have been successful: it is difficult to know.

But it was not my lot. I had an excellent home, an old-fashioned home, so I did not think it a very manly thing to be irreverent. The "atmosphere," however, was not favourable to difficulties in religion, and I had only one great heart—a sister's heart—to name freely such things to. And the sister, God bless her! now at rest, was a sufferer, not a "scholar"; and, though her moral insight was great and her sympathy perfect, there were points that could not trouble her. Her advice was invaluable—

it was to be patient, and not to brood.

At first the difficulties were simple enough; they all arose from my being preached to on the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of Scripture. They would not exist now to a well-taught boy in a well-taught school; but they did then, and they were a trouble. They were thorns in the path of religious advance.

Everything in my atmosphere turned on the Bible. There was no "Church" talked of, no divine society; and the very word "evolution" and its cognate ideas were never mentioned or even understood. And as the theory of the Bible was very strictly defined, these difficulties obtained an artificial force. Even as a boy, I had no difficulty in seeing that they did not touch the very foundations; at least, they did not seem to me to do so, but they troubled me at times.

As soon as I went to Cambridge I had to read Paley's *Evidences*. My experience of that book is that it should never be put into anybody's hands alone as a book of evidences. Why the University of Cambridge persists in doing so is one of those mysteries that perhaps only an examiner can explain. I do not believe that any thinker at Cambridge, trained

in the last century's thinking, accepts the book as adequate for a moment.

As against the Deism, the Mechanical Deism, of his day, Paley did effective work. That Deism is dead and buried, and it would be wise to bury Paley with it. There is, of course, a good deal in Paley's argument which, if re-stated up to date and supplemented, would not be useless; but it is impossible to build Christianity on it as it stands.

I had hitherto not asked for any book of evidences. The evidences of religion had always been to me traditional, amply confirmed by the really religious lives I saw and knew, and by the witness of my own heart, whenever I was striving to do my duty. But here was my University solemnly commending to me the best possible book for the purpose.

Perhaps I took it seriously. Many Freshmen do not. They put it in the same bundle with arithmetic, easy Euclid, and other mental babies' foods that make up the Little-Go. These men it may not harm. But if you take it seriously, and then find that it is inadequate, it does very serious harm. So it did to me. I rose from several perusals of it with the conviction that it was inadequate to its purpose. Was there, then, no better proof? Was it possible that there was uncertainty? Was Christianity itself a doubtful thing? And so the unadvised, unguarded mind went on to further questioning. What was the proof of God Himself? Was it *certain*? Was it demonstrative?

It took a little time, but everything seemed in doubt. I read all kinds of books, but they all left me where I was. I was not certain, and I was miserable—miserable, because all that made life worth living gathered round the moral and spiritual side of religion. Yet, if it was not certain?

I will not weary my readers, if I am not too dull for working men to read—Mr. Dearmer, in the *Commonwealth*,

tells me I am—by any further detail on that point. I understand these columns are open to men who believe, that they may state why they do. That is the only reason for my writing. That is alone why I venture to speak about myself at all.

Well, I was not happy—that was certain. At last—I remember the very day and hour and place—it came home to me that you could never find demonstrative evidence of God. Demonstrative, mind you; evidence that no man could possibly deny; a sort of "sign from heaven," such as Jews were always asking for. Just as it is always possible to deny the disinterestedness of human love, so is it always possible to deny the certainty of a spiritual existence. Line upon line from the circumference of proof may lead towards the centre; yet, if the centre be immaterial, not to be grasped by sense, its very existence may always be doubted or denied. I saw this one night quite clearly: I had been seeking the impossible. Even theism cannot be demonstratively proved; nor, indeed, can its opposite.

If, then, one had not determined to become an Agnostic, and regard the whole problem as insoluble, there was only one other alternative: a choice must be made. The lines of argument must be followed up to the edge of the unseen; whether in the unseen there is aught the man must say for himself. The leap is a leap of faith—not an unreasoned leap, nor an utterly blind one, but still a leap—a leap of faith, a choice by the will, on grounds, but still a choice.

That, then, is just what I did. I followed all the arguments to their furthest limit, and I asked myself, in sight of them all, Which is the reasonable conclusion? God or no God? Let all else wait; but is this impossible to choose? Are the grounds so weak that you dare not say? Or would you, on similar grounds, hold back your decision on any other living issue?

Once I saw that my own will could not help being a factor in the decision, I had little difficulty. I *could* not choose the opposite.

And then I saw that the argument, even where not demonstrative, was still adequate, and its supreme reasonableness was never so apparent as when I had chosen. Difficulties remained; but everything vital to me fell slowly into place. Conscience was explained. The reason's demand for a cause was met; and, what is more, for an adequate cause of nature and of character. It seemed as if an Unseen Power met the mind, and asked: "Dost thou believe?" And the mind answered: "I believe. Help thou mine unbelief."

You will say: "Well, you had gone no further than an Unitarian can go." Very likely not; that is, in reasoned conclusion. But it was an immense step. However often afterwards I was troubled by want of light, it was always a trouble over superstructure, and not foundations. Never again did I doubt the certainty of God, nor his moral relation to the world. Indeed, speaking of Unitarianism, I derived very great help then and since from sermons of the late Dr. Martineau, especially from his great book called *The Study of Religion*. I believe that if anyone who is not afraid of stiff reading will carefully read that book, and put its arguments down in some brief analysis, and will then say to himself: "Shall I, can I, choose Dr. Martineau's position? Shall I choose his conclusion?" I believe, I say, that he cannot, through any supposed use of reason, ever call himself an Atheist.

It is not to be supposed that, having found the rock, so to speak, one's mind then proceeded to build slowly on it. The fact was rather that in the disturbed waters of thought the rock had revealed itself. Faith could not be engulfed; she had touched bottom. Freedom of choice appealed alike to will, emotion, and reason. The choice once made, all the half-reasoned ex-

perience of the past, all one's best and highest feelings, all hopes and inspiration, had a ground. The spirit of prayer no longer flickered on, but burst into flame. After all, here was the light of life. "Thou art my portion for ever."

But it was clear to oneself that it was a Father in Heaven the heart wanted. The question that came to the lips almost, if not quite, at the same moment was this: What of Christ? Did He live and teach such a Father? Can we trust Him? Is it *true* that He died and rose again? Is the divine society a reality, deriving its life and hope from Him?

No one could help seeing that it is, in part, an historical question: Had Christ lived, died, and risen? And the last part of that question was, in a way, separate from the rest, because it cannot be denied that life and death might be accepted by a mind that felt unable to go further. And, what is more, the reasoning on this question in no way involves any decision on the question of inspiration in the Bible. The mind is perfectly well able to approach the one without even discussing the other.

After all, the New Testament is literature, and its credibility is a thing that can be treated by the mind from the historical standpoint as simply as that of other literature. That is, on one condition: that you have not *made up your mind* that the supernatural is impossible and incredible. That is the very question in debate, and if you have already decided against it—well, of course, you are, so to speak, a prejudiced person. You may hold what you like about inspiration, about degrees of probability and possibility, about the human element in all evidence, so long as you just keep an open mind.

That is what I strove to do: to keep an open mind, and to follow the track of Christianity back to Christ, just as one might follow the track of any other faith back to its founder. One could

not help being more deeply interested, of course ; but still one clung to the same method.

It is not impossible to an ordinary thinker to get a grip upon the first century A.D. and the years just before it. Just before it, it was plain enough, there was no Christ : a little later, a very little later, there was a suffering, struggling, living society. Its earliest literature and the literature next to its earliest you could read and enter into. It doesn't matter much who wrote it. The sincerity of the part of it, at least, that a captious critic leaves alone is absolutely plain. It reveals the society, its motives, the secrets of its inmost life and power. The more I read and searched into the previous century, the less light there was that could in the highest sense be called divine ; yet, almost immediately afterwards, every ray followed up led one to Christ.

Who founded that society ? It is certain ; every other attempt to explain it failed. Its founder was Jesus. But so near to His day could you trace back first the written record and then the oral record, that He was always close by at the end of your search.

Was that picture invented by the men of the years before Him ? The century was incapable of it. It could not do such things. By the followers ? Why, they died because they believed it ! Was it all a dream ? No man would say so who had followed that track to the end.

And so (I know I am only half telling the story) I found again the Christ that I had tried to serve, the Christ of the experience of the whole society, and my experience, however humble and mutilated, witnessed once more to the truth of the fact of His presence when one tried to serve Him in the present as in the past.

I am quite well aware that I had not touched yet, or attempted to

touch, the relations between the literature and the society, nor the conditions of the literature themselves. One step at a time. My reason had led to the path to God ; my reason had led to the historic Christ ; faith had chosen what she felt was the truest ; and all that was best in past and present lived again. All else could wait.

It seemed to me, then, that my choice on both these crucial questions could not but be made one way. I had no difficulty in seeing the strength of the opposing case ; but the other case was stronger, and my choice was made.

At that time the great argument for evolution was not, so to speak, common property. It soon became so. It sealed still more irrevocably the choice of Theism. It intensified a thousandfold the argument for an immanent Will, to whom all forces led up. The simpler the beginning, the more striking the development, the more exacting the demand for a developer.

The study of comparative religion followed. The evolution of matter led to the evolution of mind. The witness to an inner revelation lies plain in the records of religious thought. By comparison you discover the more and the less divine in it all. The rise from Totemism to the Jehovah of Deborah is visible ; still more the rise from the Jehovah of Deborah to the God of the Second Isaiah ; still more the far greater rise to Christ's Father in Heaven. It is needless to ask if there is any revelation ; the answer is that rise. The power that lies behind the rise from Palæolithic man to St. Paul must be the cause of it. Other solutions may be offered ; but none is so reasonable a solution as that.

It is, of course, possible to say that the best in the Hebrew prophets or Psalms do not appeal to one ; just as, on a lower scale, a man may say that he sees nothing in Shakespeare or Tennyson. That is sure to be possible

where choice comes in. No man can deny that two and two make four ; a man may deny the force of a spiritual appeal. But to those who do not deny, the revelation is in the very truths uttered ; to those who deny, there is no question of a rise, because there is no question even of a beginning.

Admitting the two choices, the choice of God and the choice of Christ, there remain, of course, many other all-important questions, as well as many secondary ones. But the path to their solution leads, at least, through a land and amidst an atmosphere that is no longer one of negations. You, at least, believe in something to live by. And you see things in perspective ; you can see the greater and the less in religious questions.

Besides, many questions arise that can be settled *within* the Christian society. On others, judgment may be suspended, and yet God and Christ may be believed in and lived for. It is absurd in a world where one has always fresh lessons to learn to expect to find a cut-and-dried solution of every problem.

But, of all the absurd causes for anyone to be timid about, that is the most absurd when men demand that a believer in God and in Christ shall also be bound to believe every theory and support every statement that has ever been made by religious people. I certainly was never disturbed, after my choice had once been made, by difficulties created by the theory of verbal and literal inspiration. It never seemed to be necessary to demand that the record of the faith of the past that I came nearest to should be infallible in every particular. People who have had no historical training on both sides find it difficult to hold that there may be abundance of truth of one kind, where facts of another kind are inaccurate. We may have outgrown all the geography and much of the history of a book or of a literature whose deeper truth we may have much less out-

grown. An Apostle may be a witness who can easily be in error as to the events of the days of Abraham, without being in error as to the facts of his own conversion. A peasant may be upset in faith by finding that there are discrepancies in the life of Joseph. That would only prove that he held an honest, but mistaken, theory of sacred literature. A writer in the *Clarion* might insist that if a date is wrong the whole Bible is wrong. That would only prove that he knows nothing of the nature of literature and of what the Bible really is.

However, though I saw all this, I confess that no final solution of the main difficulties came to me till the Higher Criticism had made its great analysis. I was then able to arrange in chronological order, with few exceptions, the contents of the books of the Old Testament. That done, I could see the growth of the record of what these men believed. The faith before 900 B.C., the faith between that date and 621 B.C., the faith of the great prophets, the faith of the Psalmists—could be traced in an ascending scale. The difficulties that attached to the theory of a book that was a complete revelation from the first at once dropped away. The human could be seen veiling the divine ; yet the divine element was beneath, slowly growing clearer. The Bible was a literature, just the human record of the divine growth—here more of the human, there more of the divine.

What the Bible really is that, clearly, God must have meant it to be : do not let us set ourselves to be wiser than He. Once see this, and there can be no more halting fear in its study. It is the greatest human record of the highest divine teaching we profess. It is enough to start with this. It is not, to my mind, possible to separate out the human from the highest and best human utterance.

There were, I found, two great argu-

ments used to upset my peace of mind by men and books. One is the argument from science; another is the argument from the failure of Christians. I do not know what my readers think; but to me the argument from science has been ridden to death. I have been, all my older life, a student and lover of scientific speculation. I cannot, for the life of me, see what it has to say against religion. Science is the study of physical phenomena: of what appears. It never professes to be infallible. As its knowledge widens, it freely surrenders its earlier hypotheses. New facts are constantly appearing, and it finds room for them. Of the origin and end of things it knows nothing. Some who have guessed in its name have found their guesses wrong.

The science of the nineteenth century upset the science of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The science of the twentieth century is in some crucial points already upsetting the science of the nineteenth. It does not really *upset* it; it widens it; it only upsets its infallible tiros. It is a great thing to remember that there are a great many writers, smaller fish, who know little of science, but who say, in the name of science, what she herself has never said. The axiom of science that everything must have a cause is supposed to annihilate the possibility of the supernatural. Of course, it does not do so at all: it is the merest A B C of a theologian that everything, so-called miracles included, must have a cause, and that the First Cause is God.

The argument from Christian failure has great power with men who do not feel disposed to accept Christianity. I admit its terrible force. If only we could bring it always home to ourselves, we might struggle harder to be consistent men. But, after all, it is an argument against bad Christians, not against Christ. No moral effect can be produced by a revolver. Virtue,

secured at the bayonet's point, is not virtue at all. "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye may have life," said Christ.

The fact that there are bad husbands and bad sons and bad wives is really no argument against the ethics of the family. The bad ones have defied the moral code. If the Christian code bids men be hypocrites or failures, that is another thing; but it does not. There have been bad Socialists; but that is no argument against the best Socialists' ideal.

The one thing that I feel that I have not done is to set out in full detail the arguments that have influenced me. That would take a volume. And, if I had done so, I dare say I should have given weight to some that seem less strong to my readers. The choice of what is fundamental is a very individual choice.

But perhaps, without offence, I may say that I have read through what has been written in the *Clarion* against religion, and the thing I chiefly regret is that I am not able to be so cocksure of most things as the writer is. Cocksureness, expressed in very vigorous English, has, no doubt, a great effect. If I could be cocksure, perhaps I could influence more. Cocksureness is not the same as science, or as historical insight, or as truth. At least, I have wished to say that I have made my choice, after much toil and anxious thought and study; that it grows surer day by day; and that nothing has been said in the *Clarion* (beyond mistaken conceptions of our position) that I have not long ago considered and weighed. But the choice remains.

One thing remained: to recognise and live in the divine society: to live in and seek to spread the ideal of a divine society. A divine society of men and women could not be faultless, because it was human; yet in its base, its ideal, its goal, it could struggle to re-incarnate the divine. This, surely, is the meaning of a Church. A Church is no more "perfect" than its literature

or Bible is "perfect," if by "perfect" you mean free from humanity. Progress is a keyword for any society, much more for a divine society; progress in fellowship, and even in theology—i.e., in re-stating theology in the form understood by the age.

And it is through the ideal of a divine society that I learnt all that is good in Christian Socialism, or (for that matter) in secular Socialism, too. These three words, then, contain, to my mind, the secret of living—God, Christ, the divine society.

III.—WHY I BELIEVE IN CHRISTIANITY

G. K. CHESTERTON

I MEAN no disrespect to Mr. Blatchford in saying that our difficulty very largely lies in the fact that he, like masses of clever people nowadays, does not understand what theology is. To make mistakes in a science is one thing, to mistake its nature another. And as I read *God and My Neighbour*, the conviction gradually dawns on me that he thinks theology is the study of whether a lot of tales about God told in the Bible are historically demonstrable. This is as if he were trying to prove to a man that Socialism was sound Political Economy, and began to realise half-way through that the man thought that Political Economy meant the study of whether politicians were economical.

It is very hard to explain briefly the nature of a whole living study; it would be just as hard to explain politics or ethics. For the more a thing is huge and obvious and stares one in the face, the harder it is to define. Anybody can define conchology. Nobody can define morals.

Nevertheless it falls to us to make some attempt to explain this religious philosophy which was, and will be again, the study of the highest intellects and the foundation of the strongest nations, but which our little civilisation has for a while forgotten, just as it has forgotten how to dance and how to dress itself decently. I will try and explain why I think a

religious philosophy necessary and why I think Christianity the best religious philosophy. But before I do so I want you to bear in mind two historical facts. I do not ask you to draw my deduction from them or any deduction from them. I ask you to remember them as mere facts throughout the discussion.

1. Christianity arose and spread in a very cultured and very cynical world—in a very modern world. Lucretius was as much a materialist as Haeckel, and a much more persuasive writer. The Roman world had read *God and My Neighbour*, and in a weary sort of way thought it quite true. It is worth noting that religions almost always do arise out of these sceptical civilisations. A recent book on the Pre-Mohammedan literature of Arabia describes a life entirely polished and luxurious. It was so with Buddha, born in the purple of an ancient civilisation. It was so with Puritanism in England and the Catholic Revival in France and Italy, both of which were born out of the rationalism of the Renaissance. It is so to-day; it is always so. Go to the two most modern and free-thinking centres, Paris and America, and you will find them full of devils and angels, of old mysteries and new prophets. Rationalism is fighting for its life against the young and vigorous superstitions.

2. Christianity, which is a very mystical religion, has nevertheless

been the religion of the most practical section of mankind. It has far more paradoxes than the Eastern philosophies, but it also builds far better roads.

The Moslem has a pure and logical conception of God, the one Monistic Allah. But he remains a barbarian in Europe, and the grass will not grow where he sets his foot. The Christian has a Triune God, "a tangled trinity," which seems a mere capricious contradiction in terms. But in action he bestrides the earth, and even the cleverest Eastern can only fight him by imitating him first. The East has logic and lives on rice. Christendom has mysteries—and motor cars. Never mind, as I say, about the inference, let us register the fact.

Now with these two things in mind let me try and explain what Christian theology is.

Complete Agnosticism is the obvious attitude for man. We are all Agnostics until we discover that Agnosticism will not work. Then we adopt some philosophy, Mr. Blatchford's or mine or some others, for of course Mr. Blatchford is no more an Agnostic than I am. The Agnostic would say that he did not know whether man was responsible for his sins. Mr. Blatchford says that he knows that man is not.

Here we have the seed of the whole huge tree of dogma. Why does Mr. Blatchford go beyond Agnosticism and assert that there is certainly no free will? *Because he cannot run his scheme of morals without asserting that there is no free will.* He wishes no man to be blamed for sin. Therefore he has to make his disciples quite certain that God did not make them free and therefore blamable. No wild Christian doubt must flit through the mind of the Determinist. No demon must whisper to him in some hour of anger that perhaps the company promoter was responsible for swindling him into the workhouse. No sudden scepticism must suggest to him that perhaps

the schoolmaster was blamable for flogging a little boy to death. The Determinist faith must be held firmly, or else certainly the weakness of human nature will lead men to be angered when they are slandered and kick back when they are kicked. In short, free will seems at first sight to belong to the Unknowable. Yet Mr. Blatchford cannot preach what seems to him common charity without asserting one dogma about it. And I cannot preach what seems to me common honesty without asserting another.

Here is the failure of Agnosticism. That our every-day view of the things we do (in the common sense) know, actually depends upon our view of the things we do not (in the common sense) know. It is all very well to tell a man, as the Agnostics do, to "cultivate his garden." But suppose a man ignores everything outside his garden, and among them ignores the sun and the rain?

This is the real fact. You cannot live without dogmas about these things. You cannot act for twenty-four hours without deciding either to hold people responsible or not to hold them responsible. Theology is a product far more practical than chemistry.

Some Determinists fancy that Christianity invented a dogma like free will for fun—a mere contradiction. This is absurd. You have the contradiction whatever you are. Determinists tell me, with a degree of truth, that Determinism makes no difference to daily life. That means that although the Determinist knows men have no free will, yet he goes on treating them as if they had.

The difference then is very simple. The Christian puts the contradiction into his philosophy. The Determinist puts it into his daily habits. The Christian states as an avowed mystery what the Determinist calls nonsense. The Determinist has the same nonsense for breakfast, dinner, tea, and supper every day of his life.

The Christian, I repeat, puts the mystery into his philosophy. That mystery by its darkness enlightens all things. Once grant him that, and life is life, and bread is bread, and cheese is cheese: he can laugh and fight. The Determinist makes the matter of the will logical and lucid: and in the light of that lucidity all things are darkened, words have no meaning, actions no aim. He has made his philosophy a syllogism and himself a gibbering lunatic.

It is not a question between mysticism and rationality. It is a question between mysticism and madness. For mysticism, and mysticism alone, has kept men sane from the beginning of the world. All the straight roads of logic lead to some Bedlam, to Anarchism or to passive obedience, to treating the universe as a clockwork of matter or else as a delusion of mind. It is only the Mystic, the man who accepts the contradictions, who can laugh and walk easily through the world.

Are you surprised that the same civilisation which believed in the Trinity discovered steam?

All the great Christian doctrines are of this kind. Look at them carefully and fairly for yourselves. I have only space for two examples. The first is the Christian idea of God. Just as we have all been Agnostics so we have all been Pantheists. In the godhood of youth it seems so easy to say, "Why cannot a man see God in a bird flying and be content?" But then comes a time when we go on and say, "If God is in the birds, let us be not only as beautiful as the birds; let us be as cruel as the birds; let us live the mad, red life of nature." And something that is wholesome in us resists and says, "My friend, you are going mad."

Then comes the other side and we say: "The birds are hateful, the flowers are shameful. I will give no praise to so base an universe." And the wholesome thing in us says: "My friend, you are going mad."

Then comes a fantastic thing and

says to us: "You are right to enjoy the birds, but wicked to copy them. There is a good thing behind all these things, yet all these things are lower than you. The Universe is right: but the World is wicked. The thing behind all is not cruel, like a bird: but good, like a man." And the wholesome thing in us says, "I have found the high road."

Now when Christianity came, the ancient world had just reached this dilemma. It heard the Voice of Nature-Worship crying, "All natural things are good. War is as healthy as the flowers. Lust is as clean as the stars." And it heard also the cry of the hopeless Stoics and Idealists: "The flowers are at war: the stars are unclean: nothing but man's conscience is right and that is utterly defeated."

Both views were consistent, philosophical and exalted: their only disadvantage was that the first leads logically to murder and the second to suicide. After an agony of thought the world saw the sane path between the two. It was the Christian God. He made Nature but He was Man.

Lastly, there is a word to be said about the Fall. It can only be a word, and it is this. Without the doctrine of the Fall all idea of progress is unmeaning. Mr. Blatchford says that there was not a Fall but a gradual rise. But the very word "rise" implies that you know toward what you are rising. Unless there is a standard you cannot tell whether you are rising or falling. But the main point is that the Fall like every other large path of Christianity is embodied in the common language talked on the top of an omnibus. Anybody might say, "Very few men are really Manly." Nobody would say, "Very few whales are really whaley."

If you wanted to dissuade a man from drinking his tenth whisky you would slap him on the back and say, "Be a man." No one who wished to dissuade a crocodile from eating his tenth explorer would slap it on the back

and say, "Be a crocodile." For we have no notion of a perfect crocodile; no allegory of a whale expelled from his whaley Eden. If a whale came up to us and said: "I am a new kind of whale; I have abandoned whalebone," we should not trouble. But if a man came up to us (as many will soon come up to us) to say, "I am a new kind of

man. I am the super-man. I have abandoned mercy and justice"; we should answer, "Doubtless you are new, but you are not nearer to the perfect man, for he has been already in the mind of God. We have fallen with Adam and we shall rise with Christ; but we would rather fall with Satan than rise with you."

IV.—POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS OF FAITH AND PRAYER

GEORGE HAW

I AGREE at once that there is much in the Christian religion that cannot be explained by reason. If reason were inviolable that might be a serious objection to Christianity. But man's reason is like man's justice: fickle, liable to err, varying, uncertain, and often cold and unsatisfying.

The best things in life do not come by reason. Noble deeds, sweet charity, kind hearts have nothing to do with reason. Reason would have checked some of the most heroic actions mankind has done.

Faith far outshines reason. Many people, Agnostics as well as Christians, have done by faith what they would never have done by reason. Save us from a people that live only on science and act only by reason.

Faith comes not by reason. There are more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophies. Faith is one of them.

Christians believe they are justified by faith. The road they elect to take through life is the way of faith in Christ. That way is set out in a simple and clear manner in the Gospels. So simple and clear is it that children read it and understand. Most other religions, and certainly all systems of reason, demand learning before you can comprehend them.

Why should not men have faith as children? The difference between a child and his earthly father is not nearly so great as the difference between a man and his Heavenly Father. The child has faith in his father without the aid of science and philosophy. The child's faith is greater than all the sciences and philosophies.

For example, a teacher who has just returned from Central Africa says that when he was teaching the native children the alphabet, the little folks wanted to know why A was A and why B was B. He had to tell them they must accept A as A and B as B. The native children did so—they had faith—and then they got on splendidly.

When, therefore, we, as Christian men, are twitted for preferring faith to philosophy we do not mind, for that only proves that religion is something universal, and natural to mankind. All children have faith in someone or something on earth; and that faith is very much of the same nature as the faith of Christians in the things of God: it is not based on science or philosophy.

All men can have faith in spiritual things, whether they be learned or ignorant, rich or poor. All men cannot have faith in science or philosophy, because only a comparatively few men

have the means or desire to know what science or philosophy is. But all scientists and philosophers can have faith in the Christian religion, and many of the greatest among them have such faith. One of these is Lord Kelvin, who maintains that science definitely insists on a Creative Power.

It is not so much the learning of man as the trust of the child that is wanted in order to experience the truth and peace of the Christian religion. In the words of Christ Himself:

Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Because faith has something of the simplicity and trust of childhood about it, men of the world often despise it. They scoff at the idea that a little child shall lead them. It would be much better for many of us if we forsook some of the ways of men for some of the ways of children. The trust of the child in his father is always beautiful, even when sometimes the father, in the error that belongs to all things human, leads his child astray. But our Heavenly Father never leads us astray. The trust we put in Him is never mis-placed. We are justified by faith.

According to Mr. Blatchford, faith is a poisonous principle. He says:

Let a person once admit into his system the poisonous principle of "faith," and his judgment in religious matters will be injured for years, and probably for life.

That assertion condemns itself. Faith is a necessary part of all religions. To say, therefore, that faith will injure one's judgment of religion is like saying that collectivism will injure one's judgment of Socialism. It is as though people gathered outside a house, and some go within because they have faith in what they are told they will see inside, while others stay without because they believe that what they are told is contrary to reason. Presently those within bring out the news that it

is true what they were told; their faith has been justified. Then the people outside shake their heads, and say to those who have been within: "No, your faith in what you were told you would find inside has injured your judgment of what you actually saw inside."

If faith is a poisonous principle, it is only poisonous to man's preconceived ideas before he began to put his trust in God. To the believer, faith is the real eye-opener. Faith carries one further than science. Faith widens the vision. Faith solves the riddle of the Universe; it carries the eye from earth to heaven. Faith puts us in direct communion with God, while the most that science can do is only to put us in communion with a few of the things God has made. Faith inspires us with the love and service of our brothers on earth, while science often makes us despair of men.

Faith has worked more great things in the world than anything else.

For whatever is begotten of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.

Napoleon with his Grand Army could not overcome men as St. Paul with his earnest faith overcame them. Napoleon overcame men by force for a few years only. St. Paul has been overcoming men with his faith for nineteen centuries. Napoleon ceased to overcome men after he was made captive and had closed his eyes in death. St. Paul continued to overcome men after he was put in prison, and after he was put in the grave; he continues to overcome men to this day.

The reason is because Napoleon put all his faith in himself; while St. Paul put all his faith in Christ.

Faith, as St. Paul shows, worketh through love, and love, as Christ shows, is the keystone of Christianity. First, said He, love God with all thy heart; and, second, love thy neighbour as thyself.

Faith is a recognition of the present imperfect state of man and the world. Faith means trusting in God more than in one's self or in others.

Mankind has been likened to children lost on a dark common at night. How good, then, to hear a Voice—"Be of good cheer." How good to have a Light—"the Light of the world." How much better to believe that Voice and to follow that Light—in other words, to have faith—than to dispute about them, and argue that because we of this earth are in darkness, the Light and the Voice are not to be believed in because they cannot be explained by our darkness.

Of course they cannot. "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." The Voice and the Light are not of our darkness: they are of God. It requires an act of faith to accept them; it requires a belief that is beyond ordinary human reason because ordinary human reason is of the darkness.

Rest assured the Voice and the Light will never mislead you if you have but faith to trust them. With all man's unfaithfulness, there is no unfaithfulness about God. "All have not faith, but the Lord is faithful."

Socialism itself demands faith, as Mr. Blatchford reminds us in his pamphlet on "Altruism":

If Socialism is to live and conquer it must be a religion. If Socialists are to prove equal to the task assigned them, they must have a faith—a real faith, a live faith, a new faith. The faith in a glorious destiny of the human race; the faith that demands of its votaries love and sacrifice even to death in the cause of mankind.

Such a faith cannot be bred from selfishness, nor can it be nourished upon economics.

Here Mr. Blatchford suggests a new faith: the faith in the glorious destiny of the human race. That is not a new faith; it is the old faith of Christianity.

True, it has been the faith of some men who did not own the Christian religion, but their days have often ended in bitterness and despair. A religion of man only gives abiding faith to no one. We need God, we need Christ, we need the Holy Spirit, in order to have abiding faith in the glorious destiny of the human race.

I have abundant faith in my fellow-men, because I have abundant faith in the Heavenly Father of all men. I believe in man's glorious destiny, because I believe that Christ is leading us out of the darkness.

Every time the Lord's Prayer is uttered, with its supplication, "Thy Kingdom come," we are drawing nearer to man's glorious destiny. That is our eternal hope; and faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen.

I do not think that the best things of life are only the things that can be proved according to the light of men. Man's proof is like all else that comes from man alone—liable to err, sometimes seriously. According to man's way of proving things right is often made to appear wrong. How often has the innocent party been "proved" to be guilty in a court of law?

Proof greater than faith? Nonsense. Imagine anyone trying to prove to a little child that her father and mother loved her, or worse still asking the child herself to prove that her father and mother loved her. The child knows and experiences the love without need of another's proof, and though she be the happiest child in the land she could not prove her parents' love. Nevertheless in that love lies all the child's ordinary faith.

Proof is a paltry, ineffectual thing by the side of faith.

By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the Word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear.

Again—

The things which are seen are temporal, the things which are not seen are eternal.

One need not quote the Bible only to support the Christian doctrine of faith. Let me quote from a man of our own times. "For man's well-being," says Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*, "Faith is properly the one thing needful." Or, better still, from the same author, consider this in his *Heroes* :

Belief I define to be the healthy act of a man's mind. It is a mysterious indescribable process, that of getting to believe ;—indescribable, as all vital acts are . . . Doubt, truly, is not itself a crime . . . It is the mystic working of the mind on the object it is getting to know and believe. Belief comes out of all this, above ground, like the tree from its hidden roots . . .

A man lives by believing something, not by debating and arguing about many things.

Allied to faith is prayer. The greatest and the commonest prayer is the Lord's Prayer, with its supplication, "Thy will be done"

We know that of our own free will we go astray. Having faith that the will of our Heavenly Father is perfect, we trust in His will rather than in our own. This world is neither perfect nor peaceful ; but I believe the Kingdom of Heaven is perfect and peaceful : so that when, by the express command of Christ, we are told to pray "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," we are but asking that the perfection of Heaven and the will of God be given to earth and to man. In other words, we are asking God to do away with all the evil and injustice in the world.

Faith and prayer therefore place us in harmony with the will of God. All that a sincere Christian seeks is to do the will of God. That will has made many men and women

do great things, such as their own wills would never have prompted them to do.

The will of God having been sought in prayer, has been revealed, and the revelation has sometimes filled people with misgiving. In the weakness of the flesh, they have sometimes doubted whether they could carry out God's will as revealed to them. It has often meant giving up the things which were thought to be the best. It has often meant starting what looked like mad ventures or impossible schemes. Sometimes it has meant forsaking friends and relatives, and going to places afar off. Sometimes it has meant going the way that brought slander and pain. Sometimes it has meant going the way of death. But whatever the way, men of faith have never flinched to do the will of God as revealed to them.

These things are not understood aright by Agnostics. Prayer, like faith, is really a very different thing from what they represent it to be. Take Mr. Blatchford's version :

I cannot believe that God hears and answers prayer, because the Universe is governed by laws, and there is no reason to suppose that those laws are ever interfered with. Besides, an all-wise God knows what to do better than man can tell him, and a just God would act justly without requiring to be reminded of His duty by one of His creatures.

He would be a very poor Christian who presumed to tell God what to do. Prayer is not giving orders to God but asking orders from God.

Observe, too, the orders received are seldom what erring man expected, though he be a man of prayer. God's ways are higher than our ways, His thoughts higher than our thoughts. The man of faith, however, knows that God's ways are perfect, and he takes them, though, as I have shown, it often seems to the human vision as though he were going into unfathomable darkness.

One of the first principles of prayer,

then, is not the telling of God what to do, but the asking of God what to do.

Does the soldier tell his general what to do? A soldier's duty, like a Christian's, is to obey. If the soldier, who is under man's rule, do not obey, he is punished according to man's justice; but if the Christian disobey God, he is not dealt with according to justice, but according to the enduring mercy and perfect love of God. He is forgiven. And because he is forgiven, he is asked, on his part, to forgive all men.

This brings me to what I would call one of the second principles of prayer: the well-being of others.

After all, prayer but follows the order of Christ's commandments—first to serve God, and second to serve our neighbours. We serve God by seeking in prayer to know His will, and then by doing it. We serve our neighbours by seeking their welfare in prayer, and then serving them in accordance with the wishes of our prayer. It is no use praying to know the will of God unless we are prepared to serve God. It is no use praying for the welfare of our neighbours unless we are prepared to serve them. Faith without works is not acceptable to God. As Ruskin puts it:

When you pray, "Thy Kingdom come," you either want it to come or you don't. If you don't, you should not pray for it. If you do, you must do more than pray for it—you must live for it, and labour for the Kingdom of God.

This second principle of prayer is just as much misunderstood as the first by those who disbelieve in prayer. For example, look at this further quotation from *God and My Neighbour*:

What is there so superior or meritorious in the attitude of a religious man towards God? This good man prays: for what? He prays that something be given to him, or forgiven him. He prays for gain or fear. Is that so lofty or so noble?

Such a prayer would indeed be mean and ignoble. But I have never heard such a prayer offered, nor have I ever heard of such a one being offered. Certainly, there is nothing in the teaching of Christ or in the teaching of any Christian Church to support such a conception of prayer. That is only what Agnostics imagine prayer to be. When they really understand prayer they cannot help believing in it, just as when they understand music they cannot help believing in that.

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."

The Lord's Prayer asks not only for a revelation of God's will; it asks for the Kingdom of Heaven to be established on earth for all men. That would bring peace and perfection where now we have strife and imperfection. It would achieve all that is best in Socialism. The Christian in prayer addresses not "My Father," but "Our Father"—the Father of all mankind. The Lord's Prayer asks for food for all men, for forgiveness for all men, for deliverance, safety, and protection for all men.

And so, in the prayers which the Churches have prepared for public worship, it is not man that asks God to give him something or to forgive him something; it is man that asks God to give or forgive his neighbours something.

We cannot forget that Mr. Blatchford himself, in the book he published just two years before *God and My Neighbour*, began and ended with what he himself calls "the beautiful prayer from the Litany of the Church of England." His *Britain for the British* opens with an extract from the Litany, and closes by repeating a portion of the same extract. This is how Mr. Blatchford introduces the prayer:

"To the Tory and the Radical; to the Roman Catholic, the Anglican, and the Nonconformist; to the workman and the employer; to the scholar and

the peer; to the labourer's wife, the housemaid, and the duchess; to the advocates of temperance and of co-operation; to the trade unionist and the non-unionist; to the potman, the bishop, and the brewer; to the artist and the merchant; to the poet and the navvy; to the Idealist and the Materialist; to the poor clerk, the rich financier, the great scientist, and the little child, I commend the following beautiful prayer, from the Litany of the Church of England:

That it may please Thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived.

That it may please Thee to strengthen such as do stand; and to comfort and help the weak-hearted; and to raise up them that fall; and finally to beat down Satan under our feet.

That it may please Thee to succour, help, and comfort all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation.

That it may please Thee to preserve all that travel by land or by water, all women labouring of child, all sick persons, and young children; and to show Thy pity upon all prisoners and captives.

That it may please Thee to defend and provide for the fatherless children and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed.

That it may please Thee to have mercy upon all men.

That it may please Thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts.

That it may please Thee to give and preserve to our use the kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due time we may enjoy them.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord."

That is how Mr. Blatchford opens *Britain for the British*. It is a prayer that is constantly being offered by millions of Christians all over the world. There is nothing in that prayer

to suggest that the worshippers are praying "for gain or fear." The same beautiful prayer goes on:

That it may please Thee to keep and bless all Thy people.

That it may please Thee to give to all nations unity, peace, and concord:

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord.

And in the same Litany—which can be heard any Sunday morning, and on two or three mornings in the week, in thousands of our churches—the minister and the congregation say further:

In all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From all blindness of heart; from pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy; from hatred, malice, and all uncharitable-ness,

Good Lord, deliver us.

Indeed, prayer is not the thing that makes one feel "superior" or "meritorious," but humble and charitable. Public prayer, when it is not a confession of our own weaknesses and follies and wrong-doing, or an expression of praise and thankfulness, is nearly all a supplication for the well-being of others. It is an occasion when all classes are made to feel something of the needs of all other classes and all other nations. And if more people were made to feel that, it would be better with us. One of the commonest prayers in the Book of Common Prayer is this:

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men, that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. . . . We commend to Thy Fatherly goodness those who are in any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate; that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings,

and a happy issue out of all their afflictions.

You should read this book of Common Prayer, you men of the Labour movement, who are about the only class in the country who now read good literature. Whether you believe in Christianity or not, you will like it for its literature and its all-embracing sympathy, as many of my Agnostic friends do. You will find there among the prayers in the Communion Service this supplication, which is offered every day :

And we most humbly beseech Thee of Thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

What social reformer, whether he believe in God or not, cannot echo from his heart some of the many supplications for the well-being of the poor of our people found in the Psalms? Here is one which I remember marking ten years ago :

Do justice to the afflicted and destitute.

Rescue the poor and needy :

Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked.

They know not, neither do they understand.

They walk to and fro in darkness.

When you see how easily the people are misled by political parties, by vested interests, by Jingoism and the Yellow Press, you begin to feel acutely the need of a prayer like that.

I believe that every lover of the people at some time or other feels the need of communion with something outside himself, and, indeed, outside all other human beings. Some try to meet their need by communion with Nature; but though they succeed sometimes, they do not always succeed, because Nature, like man, is imperfect. Richard Jefferies' *Story of My Heart*, after all, is the story of an unsatisfied

heart clouded with despair. It sounds to me like a cry of anguish out of terrible darkness, like a cry of one who has gone astray and knows not now his whereabouts.

One of the greatest of modern social reformers, Carlyle, who denounced the Churches and certain modern phases of professing Christianity more severely than any man, yet gives his testimony to the need of prayer. In *Past and Present*, he says: "He who takes not counsel of the Unseen and Silent, from him will never come real visibility and speech."

Here is a better example, from the same author, which I find marked in my copy of his *Hero Worship* :

Can a man's soul, to this hour, get guidance by any other method than intrinsically by that same—devout prostration of the earnest, struggling soul before the Highest, the Giver of all Light; be such prayer a spoken, articulate, or be it a voiceless, inarticulate one? There is no other method. "Hypocrisy"? One begins to be weary of all that. They who call it so have no right to speak on such matters.

And I think Carlyle ought to know, for no man had a keener scent for hypocrisy.

You will find, too, that prayer breathes very much the same spirit from all people of all times, once they accept God as the Heavenly Father. Let us go for an example to Saxon times. The example is one that supports my contention that learning, particularly science, has absolutely nothing to do with Christianity.

King Alfred believed that the world was flat, and knew less about the sun and the stars than a child knows to-day; but he knew a great deal about the love and mercy of God. However differently men may look upon the world to-day, owing to the spread of learning and the discoveries of science, the view of God remains the same. Our Heavenly Father has revealed

himself to the world as the God of Love ; and He remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, while science is constantly changing its ground.

God was the same to King Alfred or to the poorest Saxon workman who trusted Him as He is to mankind to-day. That is evident from a prayer of King Alfred's which you will find set out in full in Ruskin's *The Art and the Pleasures of England*. Here is an extract :

O Thou, Who art the Father of the Son which has awakened us, and yet urgeth us out of the sleep of our sins, and exhorteth us that we become Thine ; to Thee, Lord, I pray, Who art the supreme truth ; for all the truth that is is truth from Thee. . . . Thou art the highest good, and from Thee all beauty springs. . . . I pray Thee to command me as Thou wilt.

Here is the prayer of a man who, believing in God, though a king used to command, is content to ask the King of Kings to command him as He wills.

Rest assured, then, that prayer is not what many of our good friends who are Agnostics imagine it to be. I have heard men who have grown old and worn in the service of God and their neighbours say that prayer is sometimes like the shedding of blood. Christians are just as human as their brothers, the Agnostics, and, like them, they shrink from suffering, and sometimes shrink at a hard duty ; and often the will of God means suffering and a hard duty. But those who ask to be shown that

will, and seek to do it, find a Comforter in Christ ; for He took upon Himself the weaknesses of human nature by becoming man.

In particular, Christians feel how very human, when the trial of the Cross was nigh at hand, was the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, with its cry of heart-anguish : "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me : nevertheless, not My will, but Thine, be done." There, though the flesh was weak, the spirit was willing to submit to God's will.

Again, when the burden of the Cross was actually being borne, and His persecutors were reviling Him, are we to suppose that the human nature within Him had not to be overcome before He could utter the prayer from the Cross for their forgiveness ? But just as He knew in Gethsemane that the service of the Heavenly Father meant doing His will, so here on Calvary He did not forget that the service of our brothers on earth means the forgiveness of our brothers. Therefore He prayed : "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Prayer, then, to people who believe in Christ's commandment—to serve first our Father in Heaven, and to serve, second, our brothers on earth—consists first in seeking the will of that Father, and, second, in seeking the well-being of those brothers ; and even when the sincere believer does pray for himself alone, it is not as the Pharisee, "I thank Thee that I am not as the rest of men," but as the humble publican, standing afar off, ashamed to lift his eyes to Heaven : "God be merciful to me a sinner."

VIII

IN DEFENCE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

PROFESSOR W H. BENNETT, D.D., LIT.D.

THERE are, of course, as many varieties of opinion among Christians about the Old Testament as there are diversities of view among Socialists as to many items in the social programme. For the present writer, naturally, the most Christian view is that which he himself holds, and it is this view only which he is concerned to advocate. Readers of the *Clarion*, however, may reasonably ask whether this article represents any considerable section of Christian opinion, and in a moment we will do what we can to satisfy them on this point; but, at the outset, let us state what we hold as the Christian faith on this subject.

To begin with, let us clear away some misunderstanding as to the doctrine of the older section of the Bible. First, then, the human authorship of the books is not a matter of essential doctrine. No one has a right to brand his neighbour as a heretic because of difference of views as to who wrote the Pentateuch, or the Book of Job, or the latter part of Isaiah. I never met with anyone who believed that Moses wrote every word of the first five books including the account of his own death; but there may be such people. And there are people who believe that Moses wrote almost all the Pentateuch; and some who believe that he may have written small fragments of it; and some who do not believe that he wrote any of it—and they may all be equally good Christians.

Again, the amount of history in the

Old Testament narratives is not matter of essential doctrine. Of course, we are not concerned with passages which are expressly stated not to be historically accurate. But, apart from these, unfortunately, some teachers, preachers, and writers in their public pronouncements give the impression that they maintain that every narrative in the Old Testament is historically accurate in every detail. Such utterances must not be taken too seriously; they are often due to the heat of argument, or the excitement of rhetoric, or the unconscious dramatic instinct of literary composition. Sweeping statements are most pleasing both to speaker and audience. It is possible that there are persons sufficiently expert in mental gymnastics to hold such a position, and many honestly think that they do so; only, however, through their failure to understand what such a theory really involves, and through their lack of knowledge and appreciation of the real facts. Most of those who make unqualified statements as to literal inspiration would make large concessions if they were cross-examined. But there are many who hold that all the Old Testament narratives are substantially accurate, and that the inaccuracies are only few and trivial. But, again, there are many who would be content to regard the narratives as simply materials from which history may be constructed according to the ordinary methods of historical criticism. All these different schools of opinion have a

right to a place in the Christian Church.

But, again, it is not an essentially Christian doctrine—indeed, it may fairly be maintained, from the standpoint of the most traditional orthodoxy, that it is not a Christian doctrine at all—that the moral and spiritual teaching found in the Old Testament is everywhere absolutely perfect. Many of the laws are not ideal laws for a perfect society; neither are they ordained for all men everywhere in all ages, they were addressed to a particular generation of a single people, Israel. Similarly, much of the teaching is not the accurate scientific statement of exact truth, but uses the approximate, figurative, pictorial method suited to the minds of a primitive race.

Having stated what must not be regarded as part of the Christian Faith as to the Old Testament, we will now give a brief positive exposition. We may begin with the more important statements of the New Testament on this subject; thus II. Peter i. 21: "No prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." The principle stated here may be applied to the Old Testament generally; it records for us the teaching of men who were moved by God to labour for righteousness and faith. Its history is written in the same spirit. It is the work of men who were moved by God to edify their fellows by setting before them examples and warnings, and by illustrating and expounding the moral Government of God, the eternal purpose that runs through the ages. Such work is not due to the will of man apart from God, but to the suggestion and influence of the Divine Spirit.

Again, on a different point, we have II. Timothy iii. 15-17: "The sacred writings are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired by God is also profitable for

teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good works."

These, therefore, are the qualities which are possessed by the Old Testament when studied under the influence of the "faith which is in Christ Jesus"; and these are some of the qualities implied by the term "inspiration."

It is important, however, to distinguish between two different functions of the Old Testament. First, it is a prologue and introduction to the New Testament; and, secondly, it is a part of the permanent Revelation of God to man.

First, then, it is a prologue and introduction to the New Testament. The latter is unintelligible without the older Scriptures, not only in its language, and in many details as to manners and customs, and in historical and geographical references, but also as to its position in the history of religion. The Old Testament traces the gradual revelation which led up to the Gospel of Christ, together with those dealings of the Divine Providence with Israel which prepared the way for the coming of Christ. This information may be derived from the Old Testament by the ordinary methods of scientific criticism; but the preservation of the material is due to the influence of the Divine Spirit.

Secondly, the Old Testament is part of the permanent Revelation of God to man. But even when we consider it as such, we must remember that its permanent meaning, use, and application are controlled by the teaching of Christ.

We might, perhaps, use an illustration. A handbook of chemistry might be compiled in two parts—first, a historical introduction, giving an account of the series of experiments which have led up to the present position of the science; and, secondly, an exposition

of facts, theories, and methods of the chemistry of to-day. The first part might include quotations from older writers describing the experiments they had made. In some of these quotations language might be used which would be erroneous in the light of our present knowledge, or theories might be advocated which have since been exploded; but the intelligent reader would easily understand that such matters were to be corrected according to the information given in the second part of the book; and the presence of this obsolete material would not prevent him from taking an interest in the historical survey, and deriving inspiration from it. But such a history of chemistry would embody many paragraphs which stated permanent principles in a form still intelligible and instructive.

So the Old Testament includes a great deal that is not merely historically edifying, but appeals directly to the heart, and will, and conscience of men to-day; and, as we believe, appeals more forcibly than any other literature outside of the Bible.

Much of what has been said above is notoriously part of the Christian Faith; but a word or two must be said as to the limitations with which the previous section began. Certain propositions were enumerated which were declared not to be essential to faith, viz., that books with personal titles were wholly written by the persons whose names they bore, or by the persons to whom they were ascribed by tradition; that all the Old Testament narratives are accurate history; and finally, that all the teaching is morally and spiritually perfect.

In view of the popular perversions of Christianity, which put forward a baseless claim to be exclusively orthodox, we must say briefly why these propositions are not part of the Christian Faith. Briefly, then, no such doctrines are either stated or implied either in

the New Testament or in the vast majority of the creeds and confessions of the various Churches. The New Testament sometimes quotes Old Testament books by titles differing from those given in the Old Testament; it makes statements about the history of Israel which contradict those found in the Hebrew Scriptures; and Christ and St. Paul expressly correct much of the teaching of the Old Testament; and Hebrews vii. 18-19, says, with reference to the Pentateuch: "There is a disannulling of the foregoing commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect."

Turning to creeds and confessions, the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds ignore the Old Testament altogether; in the Thirty-Nine Articles, the seventh deals with the Old Testament, and in no way states or implies any of the three propositions we have repudiated, but, on the contrary, declares that the Mosaic Law is superseded, so far as it is ritual and civil.

These examples might be indefinitely multiplied. And as creeds and confessions do not count much nowadays, it may be as well to add that such a faith as has just been expounded is held very widely in the Evangelical Churches, both by leading scholars and preachers and by ordinary believers.

If I remember rightly, Mr. Blatchford, in proposing this series of articles, suggested that each writer should state what he believed, and why he believed it. A true answer to the latter question would have included the same reason (amongst others) in most cases. Everyone, or almost everyone, would have admitted that he was a Christian largely because he was born and bred to the faith under favourable circumstances; that he believed (partly, at any rate) through the influence of authority, heredity, and environment.

One wonders, for instance, whether the Archbishop of Canterbury would have been converted to the true faith if he had been born and bred a Mohammedan, and had had the case for Christianity presented to him at the age of forty? It is a pleasing speculation.

Nevertheless, authority, environment, and heredity are, as far as they go, valid reasons for belief. Authority reinforces individual opinion by the judgment of organised societies and trained experts. "Life," it has been said, "is the faculty which a living creature has of adapting itself to its environment." The faith, therefore, which results from the normal reaction between men and their environment is, presumably, a natural and advantageous development of their spiritual life. Heredity, again, on a large scale, and under normal conditions, involves the survival of the fittest; and the fact that the faith of a large community is partly based on heredity, going back through many generations, is a piece of evidence that has appreciable weight.

It may be said that such arguments prove too much; that they might be urged in favour of Mohammedanism, Buddhism, and Brahminism. Doubtless, because these religions include a measure of truth; but none are on the same level with the Old Testament. The inspiration of the Old Testament is owned by three world wide religions, which control most of the leading races of the world—Christianity, Judaism, and (in a measure, at any rate) by Mohammedanism. The Hebrew Scriptures have maintained a vigorous life under the most varied environment, some of them for hundreds of years before the books of the New Testament were written.

But, before turning to other considerations, let us recall the more debatable propositions we have laid down as to the Old Testament. We need only deal with these, because the strongest argument in favour of religious faith is

a clear and reasonable statement of the truth advocated. Much that we have advanced is obvious when once stated, and some points which might be challenged elsewhere will be readily accepted by most readers of the *Clarion*; but there remain others on which something may be said.

We claim that the Old Testament, taken as a whole, and read in the light of the teaching of Christ and His apostles, promotes individual and social righteousness, and strengthens, encourages, and gladdens the believer by bringing him into fellowship with God; and also that the Old Testament possesses these qualities in a greater degree than any other literature, except the New Testament and the writings which repeat, enforce, and interpret the teaching of the Bible; and, lastly, that these qualities are due to inspiration or revelation, to a divine influence acting on and through the men whose teaching is recorded.

The spiritual power of the Old Testament is matter of experience and testimony, and is established by an overwhelming mass of evidence, provided by countless witnesses, of many races and epochs, possessing every possible variety as regards time of life, social position, occupation, or education.

The claim for the unique position of the Bible, including the Old Testament, is not so clearly established, and the present writer does not profess to enjoy an exhaustive knowledge of the sacred writings of various religions; but, from such direct and indirect acquaintance as he has on the subject, he is convinced that the more fully the Scriptures of other religions are studied, the more conspicuous will be the unique pre-eminence of the Bible.

The remaining point is the assertion that this unique character is due to a divine activity, an assertion which the Editor of the *Clarion* would probably stigmatise as baseless. But if there is a God "who worketh hitherto"—and

for the discussion of this topic we must refer our readers to other articles of this series—we cannot hesitate to recognise His working in the moral and spiritual education of a people which can be discovered by the ordinary methods of scientific historical criticism in the Old Testament; nor are we likely to be mistaken if we acknowledge as His word those great passages, which even to-day stir our hearts, quicken our consciences, and ennoble our wills.

In conclusion, we may say a word or two about the objections to the Christian view of the Old Testament, as they are stated in *God and My Neighbour*. They are summed up in the sentence on p. 17, which says that "Historically, scientifically, and ethically, the Bible is imperfect," by which I understand the author to mean that the Bible contains narratives which are not perfectly accurate accounts of actual events, statements about Nature which are not scientifically correct, and moral teaching which does not commend itself to modern ethical ideas.

But our readers will see at once that such objections are quite irrelevant to the faith set forth above.

A further objection is that, unless a revelation is historically, scientifically, and ethically perfect, it cannot be divine. I must confess that there seems to me to be a very pronounced spirit of ecclesiastical dogmatism in the way in which Mr. Blatchford tells us what God would or would not do. We have to put on one side his sweeping *a priori* statements, and, on the other, the claim made by Christians that from the experience, observation, and study of actual facts, they discern the presence, the utterances, and the working of a Divine Personality in the Bible, as well as in Nature, man, and society.

The claim is made with confidence, and yet with the full admission that the Presence is only discerned in dim outline, with a margin of uncertainty

as to details. In fact, Mr. Blatchford's objections to revelation, if they were of any force, would be equally valid against the existence of any active, benevolent, personal God; and Mr. Blatchford, with perfect consistency, denies the existence of such a God.

In passing, one may be allowed to remark that the chapter, "What I Can and Cannot Believe," is mainly taken up with stating what Mr. Blatchford "cannot believe." One could wish he would state the positive side of his faith, simply in its positive aspect, with equal point and eloquence. Probably in such a positive statement one might find common ground on which discussion would be possible. But in a single article of this series the existence of God may be assumed on the strength of the other articles. With this assumption, the objection that the Bible cannot contain a divine element or be a divine gift to a man, because it is imperfect, at once falls to the ground.

On page 19 of *God and My Neighbour*, we are told that if the ethical code of the Bible had been divine, it would have been perfect from the first. But why? All analogy is against such a view. And, indeed, the recent developments of science have greatly strengthened the argument from analogy set forth by Butler. On the assumption, which we are warranted in making in this article, that God is the Author of Nature, the material Creation is divine; but it was not perfect from the first. At the beginning there were rudimentary creatures, vastly inferior to those now existing, which have been gradually developed through countless intermediate stages. It is strictly analogous that the Divine Spirit should at the beginning communicate simple rudimentary truths suitable to the elementary moral life of primitive man, and should develop, *pari passu*, the revelation of the character and

will of God, and the spiritual nature of man.

Mr. Blatchford lays great stress on the unworthy representation of Jehovah in some passages of the Old Testament; but this difficulty disappears when we take the Bible as a whole, and understand that it is the record of a progressive revelation, that the earlier passages belong to periods in which men had only begun to understand God, and that such passages must be corrected by the teaching of later times.

If we rightly comprehend Mr. Blatchford's position, we think it probable that his censures of the Old Testament would not be persisted in, and he would be content with the modern, critical, Christian view of it, if he could be relieved of the difficulties he finds in the general course of Providence, and those which arise from his Determinist metaphysics, and from his incredulity as to the presence of genuine history in the Bible.

HAVE THE GOSPELS BEEN TAMPERED WITH?

REV. W. C. ALLEN, SUB-RECTOR OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

I.

THE whole fabric of Christianity, says Mr. Blatchford (p. 106), rests wholly upon the Gospels. This is demonstrably untrue. Christianity existed before the Gospels, for there is undeniable evidence that there were Christian Churches in Palestine, in Asia Minor, in Greece, and in Italy before the earliest of our Gospels was written.

The evidence exists in the letters of St. Paul and the book of the Acts of the Apostles. But, says Mr. Blatchford, "many critics and scholars deny the existence of Paul." "There is no trustworthy evidence to oppose to that conclusion" (pp. 91-92). I question the "many." It is possible that there may be a few so-called critics and scholars who adventure so extravagant a denial, just as people may be found to doubt the authorship by Shakespeare of the plays ascribed to him by the common consent of scholars, or to assert that the earth is flat, although scientific research has proved it to be spherical. But, in any case, the "no trustworthy evidence" is all wrong.

Mr. Blatchford says, elsewhere, that "there is no genuine historical evidence outside the New Testament that such men as Paul, Peter, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John ever existed." There is, on the contrary, a good deal of evidence of the existence of at least the two first-named. If Mr. Blatchford will read only one such piece of evi-

dence, let him look at a letter, written towards the end of the first century, from Rome to Corinth, by one Clement. There he will find the following words:

Let us set before our eyes the good Apostles. There was Peter, who, by reason of unrighteous jealousy, endured not one, nor two, but many labours, and, having borne his testimony, went to his appointed place of glory. By reason of jealousy and strife, Paul, by his example, pointed out the prize of patient endurance. After he had been seven times in bonds, had been driven into exile, had been stoned, had preached the Gospel in the East and the West, he won the noble renown which was the reward of his faith, having taught righteousness unto the whole world, and having reached the furthest bounds of the West; and when he had borne his testimony before the rulers, he departed from the world, and went unto the holy place, having been found a notable pattern of patient endurance.

Christianity, then, existed before the Gospels, and the story of the life of the Lord was handed down by word of mouth before it was put into writing. But when the four Gospels were written in the second half of the first century, they soon took the place of the earlier oral tradition. That is not by any means the same as saying that Christianity is based solely upon the Gospels. It is more than probable that Christianity would have continued to spread if no word of Christ's life had ever been

written, and if the memory of His sayings and doings had been handed down orally from generation to generation; but when once the Gospels had been written they naturally supplanted oral tradition, and now remain almost the only evidence for the details of Christ's earthly life.

I say *for the details of His life, not for Christianity*, because the facts of Christ's earthly life are a part only of Christianity. Indeed, they are a part only of Christ's life, for Christianity has always asserted that the Christ whose earthly life is recorded in the Gospels still exists, and moves in human affairs through His spirit.

The evidence, therefore, for His life in his larger sense—*i.e.*, for *Christianity*—must be sought partly in the Gospels, but also in the entire history of Christianity. There is the effect produced by Christianity in transforming the moral ideals of men. There are the Christian institutions—hospitals and the like. There is the Church of Christ (using the word in the widest sense of all who obey Christ and call Him Lord), its worship and its beliefs. There is the long record of Christian literature written by men who wished to place on record their witness to the faithfulness of Christ's promises. There is the long roll of men and women who have left behind them no written records, but who died in His faith and fear. There is the joyful witness of multitudes of men and women now living that He guides those who seek for His guidance.

If we are to gain any real knowledge of Christ's life, we must look for the facts concerning it over this wide and varied range of evidence. The historian who neglects any large part of it will have proportionately unhistorical knowledge of Christ.

II

But still it is, of course, quite true that the greater part of the recorded

facts of Christ's earthly life have been recorded in the Gospels. We want, therefore, some assurance that they are credible witnesses to fact.

Mr. Blatchford objects to the argument that the Gospels are true because they are inspired by God (p. 103). I quite agree with him, and should prefer to say that the Gospels are inspired because, and in so far as, they are faithful witnesses to historical truth. But when he defines "faith" as "the deadly principle that we are to believe any statement, historical or doctrinal, without evidence," he is defining, not "faith" as Christ used the word, nor "faith" as St. Paul understood it; but some creation of his own imagination.

We believe that the Lord said and did very much what the Gospels attribute to Him because, as historical evidence goes, they are very good witnesses.

Let us examine this, so far as it concerns the first three Gospels.

First, St. Mark. Here we have a small book, coming to us from a remote antiquity, undated and anonymous. The earliest manuscripts are of the fourth century. What can we say of its authorship and date?

The evidence of Christian writers who lived in the latter part of the second century proves that it was then in common use as an officially recognised Church book. In the first half of the century it is mentioned by an Asiatic writer as the work of Mark, the interpreter of St. Peter. This throws back the date of the writing of the book into the first century, for many years must have elapsed since the first publication of the work and its general acceptance in Church circles. Within the first century it is assigned by nearly all modern writers to the period 65-80 A.D., so that the year 70 A.D. may be taken as an approximately certain date.

Now, examine the book, and you will find that the writer is recording

facts about the life of the Lord with which he supposed his readers to be already acquainted. He writes for Christian people that they may have in writing a record of the facts upon which their faith was based, for then, as now, Christian people believed, not without evidence, but because of evidence.

In other words, the facts of Christ's life which the writer of this book has recorded in so masterly a manner had been handed on to him from a still earlier period. He himself probably wrote at Rome, but his information came from Palestine. It represents the traditions about the life of Jesus as they had been preserved in Palestine among His friends and disciples who had survived His death.

If it is a question of evidence, can there be much better evidence than this? The Lord died about the year 30 A.D. About 50 A.D.—*i.e.*, twenty years later—St. Paul began to found his Churches. Everywhere he told them of the life of Jesus, His resurrection, and His ascension. About the year 70 the second Gospel was written, containing the Palestinian tradition of the life of Jesus. That this tradition is, in its main outline, accurate is shown by its general congruity with St. Paul's teaching. You may say that you can push back the date of the Gospel from 70 to 50 A.D., because St. Paul's preaching is based upon the tradition embodied in the Gospel. In other words, St. Paul and the Gospel are independent witnesses that within twenty years of the death of Christ His disciples were teaching the main facts of His life as we have them recorded in our second Gospel.

The agreement of St. Paul with the Gospel is very important, because during his whole life he was dogged by Jewish controversialists, who tried every promising plan of destroying his authority and undermining his influence. If they could have shown that his teaching about the life of Christ

was absolutely unhistorical, and that the real Jesus was something quite different, they would certainly have done so. They would triumphantly have shown that Christ did no miracles; that His asserted perfection of character must be counterbalanced by human defects, and that the story of His resurrection was a demonstrable fable.

Turning now to the first and third Gospels, the following statements are hardly controvertible:

(a) They must have been written between 65 and 130 A.D.

(b) The writers have used written sources. Both have borrowed from St. Mark and from a second source, which seems to have been a collection of the Lord's sayings traditionally ascribed to the Apostle St. Matthew, and, in any case, representing an early Palestinian tradition.

As to Christ's sayings, I will not now attempt to discuss the historical value of the remaining portions of these two Gospels; but will ask you to reflect that for the life of the Lord we have as historical documents—

(a) The second Gospel;

(b) A collection of discourses and sayings, now embedded in the first and third Gospels;

(c) St. Paul's letters.

These three sources of history are probably Palestinian and early. They reflect the traditional belief about the life of Jesus as it existed in Palestine in the first twenty or thirty years after His death.

What, then, is this traditional belief? That Jesus of Nazareth was a teacher of righteousness. That He did miraculous acts of mercy and kindness, not to attract attention, but out of compassion and love for suffering humanity. That He taught men that all God's promises of fuller revelation were fulfilled in Himself. That the contrast involved in His teaching to the religious and political ideals of the rulers

of His people led to His death. That He foresaw this, and told His disciples that death would be no barrier to His communion with and guidance of them. And that He rose from the dead, in the sense that the sacred body which His disciples laid to rest vanished from the sepulchre, whilst He appeared to certain of them for a limited period in a form and manner which changed their despair into a triumphant conviction of His sovereignty over life, which made them the victorious Apostles of a Gospel which has transformed life, and is conquering the world.

III.

What, then, is the value of the traditional life of Christ just sketched?

In the first place, it is scientifically impossible to form any right judgment upon it if it be isolated from its effects in the history of humanity. Mr. Blatchford attempts to appreciate it in the light of his biased preconception that miracles do not happen, and that the resurrection is, therefore, a fable. If you approach any fact of life in this intolerant spirit, and close your eyes to the greater part of the evidence you will certainly misunderstand it.

Let me try to sketch what I believe to be the better way of regarding this tradition. The witness of history, of philosophy, of science, and of the human conscience, seems to me to make the existence of a God of intelligence and of love a necessary fact of life. I believe this to be a fact resting upon evidence, the evidence of the human consciousness, bearing witness to the divine life immanent in life.

In the pre-Christian history of the world, I find this divine life everywhere communicating itself to men in proportion to their ability to perceive it. In the witness of the early Christian teachers I find evidence that the divine intelligence had become in-

carnate in the person of Christ. They believed this, not only because the life of the Jesus whom they had known was unique in moral force and beauty, penetrated with a super-human loveliness of goodness, and characterised by an unfailing fulness of power, which made it entirely different from the lives of ordinary men; but because the Christ whom they had known in Galilee appeared to them after this death, and, when He ceased to appear to them in bodily form, spiritually communicated to them power and life and grace in such a way that their conviction of His personal existence never faltered.

In the subsequent history of the world, I find this same witness perpetuated in the witness of men and women to the unending miracle of the communication to them of the divine life of Jesus Christ. This witness, manifold and constant, seems to me incontrovertible evidence of fact, and, in the light of it, I go back to the records of Christ's earthly life, with which we are dealing. Judged as all documents of history are judged, they are excellent witnesses. In respect of date, of nearness to the events described, in general acceptance as soon as they were written, they must be highly appraised.

But the miracles! Well, why not? We are speaking of records of One whose unique character is stamped on the pages of the Gospels in such a way that few, if any, could be found so uncritical as to deny that at least this aspect of the Gospels is descriptive of an historical character. We are speaking of One Who has moved the world, even as He said: "If I be lifted up will draw all men to Me." We are speaking of One who to-day, as in every age of the world since the Christian era, transforms human lives from lives of weakness and moral decay into lives of power and moral progress.

Of such a One, who shall say what is or is not impossible? By what standard shall we judge Him? Which

of us has knowledge to enable us to say this or that is not possible for Him?

I should have liked to write about the remaining portions of the first three Gospels and of St. John. But if I have in any measure shown that St. Mark, and the source used in the first and third Gospels, and St. Paul are, on the whole, credible witnesses to fact, that must suffice.

I do not think that all the facts recorded in the Gospels are equally strongly supported. But I am sure that if the average man reads his Gospels, and believes that Christ did what is there recorded of Him, and said what is attributed to Him, he is nearer the truth than is one who judges the Gospels by the measure of his own ignorance, and disbelieves everything that he reads because of superficial difficulties.

I will only add that the discrepancies in details, so far from throwing suspicion upon the main facts, confirm the general credibility of the story. Absolute agreement would not confirm the independent accuracy of the three writers, but would only prove them to be dependent one upon another, or upon a common source.

IV.

Before closing, I must say something about Mr. Blatchford's question: "Have the Gospels been tampered

with?" It seems to me to betray great misconception as to elementary facts.

What are the Gospels? There are a very large number of Greek manuscripts containing them, dating from the fourth century onwards. In a sense, all these manuscripts have been tampered with, because no one of them contains the exact text of the Gospels as they left the hands of the writers. But all books of antiquity are in the same condition.

It is the business of textual critics to reconstruct the text from the manuscripts and from other sources. That can be done with a large measure of certainty. We may say of the text represented by the English Revised Version that, in the main, it does represent what the Evangelists wrote.

If Mr. Blatchford wishes to be assured of that, let me refer him to the introduction of the great Cambridge textual critics, Westcott and Hort, pp. 276-284. There are passages where the text is uncertain; there may be others where undetected error has crept in. But if Mr. Blatchford means that the text of the Gospels is so uncertain that we cannot, for the most part, believe that we read what the Evangelists wrote, then a most decided negative must be given to his question.

I will only add that I shall be glad, so far as time allows, to answer any questions which may suggest themselves to *Clarion* readers, who can write to me at Exeter College, Oxford.

X

CHRIST'S MIRACLES

I.—REVELATION AND MIRACLES	<i>Margaret Benson</i>
II.—MIRACLES AND MODERN CIVILISATION	<i>G. K. Chesterton</i>

I.—REVELATION AND MIRACLES

MARGARET BENSON

It would be an ill-compliment to Mr. Blatchford who has generously thrown his pages open to opponents of his views for those opponents to abate anything of their argument; yet it is always pleasant to begin with agreement, and, if there is nothing else in Mr. Blatchford's book that we can agree with, we may well agree with his beginning and his end—with his view of the wide discrepancy that exists between Christianity as it ought to be and Christianity as it is; with his fervent desire to bridge the gulf between Society as it is and Society as it ought to be. If there is one thing more than another that we agree with in Mr. Blatchford's preface, it is that his book is "rather a religious book." If he had said "rather a Christian book," we should not have contradicted him. When he sums up the horrors of London, he calls it a heathen city; and his most eloquent sermons are on the text: "Woe unto you that devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers."

And disagreeing, as we do, with something or other, or with most things, in almost every page of *God and My Neighbour*, we will go further yet, and say it is "rather" a theological book. The guarded statements of the Athanasian Creed assert no such

familiarity with the Divine nature as Mr. Blatchford possesses; but then no one knows so well what the Divine nature would be, if it had existed, as those who profess neither to know nor care whether it does exist.

But in so wide a field for the controversialist as the book presents, it is necessary to set a limit. In this paper, therefore, I am specially concerned with three main propositions of Mr. Blatchford; on the establishment of which much depends:

1. Revelation excludes evolution.
2. The Christian has received no message from God.
3. There are no miracles.

Mr. Blatchford does not seriously challenge the view that the Bible gives us the history of the development of the idea of God: only he says if so it is not a revelation; if ideas of God are human ideas, "all religions are made by man."

Let us apply the same argument to science.

If men gradually, through many mistakes, have discovered the laws of the world, if their ideas of the world are human ideas, would that prove that men had made the laws of the world? The whole point at issue in either case is whether this development through

human ideas is a process of discovery or invention.

Again, Mr. Blatchford says a thing must be *either* created or evolved! Why? If the chicken has developed out of the egg, the egg had within it a power of development. Evolution necessarily implies the most vast and beautiful kind of creation—the creation of something which can develop. Sculptors have made many beautiful statues, but it would need a divine sculptor to make something which could grow into a beautiful statue. If the God of Creation is the God of Revelation (and that is the whole teaching of the Bible), then it is “natural” that Revelation should be gradual; and the Revelation, through Science, of Evolution should help us to understand the Evolution, through the Religious consciousness, of Revelation.

But, again, Mr. Blatchford complains, in effect, that if revelation is gradual, it is no good at all. He asks: “Do you believe that if God had come down on earth with a cohort of shining angels, and had said: ‘Behold, I am the only God,’ these savages would not have left all baser gods, and worshipped Him?”

But what would they have worshipped? Power, not righteousness; a stage effect, not a Divine Spirit.

If Mr. Blatchford had known his Bible a little better, or history a little more, he would not have put this as an original idea; he would have realised how often this question, in one shape or another, had been faced; repelled by Christ as the deadliest temptation, accepted by many to the success of their lives and the ruin of their spiritual ideals.

This first axiom about revelation is intimately connected with a second—that no Christian has had a message from God—“in written or spoken words,” Mr. Blatchford adds.

Why in written or spoken words? Why, in the name of reason, should a limitation which neither human nor

animal communications recognise, be imposed on the divine? The very animals communicate without words: “heart to heart” is a commonplace of the poets; while for our most prosaic purposes the sunlight signals directions; an unknown force travels along our wires; and now Marconi casts out his messages on the void air here in Cornwall, and catches them again in Scotland or in Canada. But God alone must use a voice and a pen!

If ever a revelation was received by apostles and prophets, if ever the Church gave authoritative recognition to the Bible as supremely the revelation of God, it can only be in virtue of some faculty by which messages of God can be received and can be recognised by man, then, and now, and at all times.

Can the Christian possibly assent to the fact that he receives no message from God, when he hears it within and without, receives revelations in Nature, in history, in his own heart, in human intercourse? When he hears it in the very denunciations of Mr. Blatchford against formality and self-seeking under the guise of religion, as well as in the far more eloquent denunciations of the same by the prophets? In Mr. Blatchford’s true and compassionate desire to relieve suffering, to instruct ignorance, to abolish sin, as well as in the far greater sincerity and compassion of One who knew that the spirit of the Lord God was upon Him, because the Lord had sent Him to heal up the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to captives, and recovery of sight to the blind?

Many hear God’s voice and echo it, not knowing that they do so. “*Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship*, Him declare I unto you,” said St. Paul.

This brings us to Mr. Blatchford’s third axiom: “Miracles don’t happen.” What a pity Mr. Blatchford does not tell us what he means by a miracle!

A small spider was drowning in a

large drop of water. A human being saw it, and touched the water with a finger, and made the spider's flood ebb away, so that he struggled to dry land, and ran away. Now, it is more than probable that that particular tiny spider had never come across a human being before, and never would again. And he could not have perceived enough of him to know it was a living being like himself, only infinitely greater, and with purposes and plans immeasurably larger and clearer; who by the touch of a finger delivered him in his utmost need.

This unique event, then, an interference with the course of Nature for the spider, was, in reality, carried out according to the laws of Nature; for there happened to be in the universe a Personality, much beyond the spider's apprehension, which brought in the action of a higher law, brought intellect and will and greater physical forces to bear on the laws of Nature, which were quite too much for the spider.

When we say a miracle is incredible because it would alter the course of Nature, it depends entirely on what we mean by the course of Nature whether our answer is scientifically true.

Every action of a higher power alters the course of lower Nature.

A plant alters the course of Nature when, in virtue of its principle of life, it lifts up particles that gravitation draws down. Man alters the course of Nature when he dams a river, makes a bear dance and a parrot talk; his whole life is spent in altering the course of Nature, if by Nature we mean Nature apart from man or apart from the highest faculties of man; for a doctor alters the course of Nature when he cures a patient, and a philanthropist when he intervenes to reform and raise a character which is on the line of deterioration. Of course, when man alters the course of Nature he works by means of laws of Nature.

Just so, if there is a Personality

above man, it will certainly alter the course of Nature, if by Nature we mean Nature as it should have been apart from this Personality. And, in the name of sober reason and science, what makes us imagine that, whereas star opens out beyond star through millions of light-years, that there is in the Universe no personality to open out above man—man, on this little undistinguished planet?

But if, as I say, there is such a Personality, it must produce effects which would not otherwise occur, some of which may astonish us. But, though it is probable that they will astonish us, it is not particularly important. We are surprised by Röntgen rays, which were there from the beginning of the world; or by radium, which must have been so needed in physical explanation that we ought to have been surprised at its absence! Some people, like shying horses, are astonished at everything, and in earlier days, no doubt, people imagined many miracles in comparatively simple events; many now, on the other hand—not because they are wiser, but because they are not wise enough,—are not astonished at stupendous events, nor wonder at the profoundest mysteries. The spider, probably, was not a bit surprised, because he neither thought about the laws of Nature nor dimly imagined the human being who delivered him, even though the human being's house was all his universe. Our surprise is of little importance except to attract our own attention. What is of supreme importance is whether in the course of Nature, and in altering the course of Nature, a higher Personality is at work.

This, then, is the point—not whether unexpected events only show the action of a higher Personality, but whether there is an aspect under which the facts of the world, the evolution of history, the revelation of science all bear this interpretation. Mr. Blatchford says that the existence of one suffering

creature is of more importance to him than the existence of God. On the other hand, if we consider not Mr. Blatchford's sentiment, but that suffering creature in himself, we see that what is of supreme importance to him is whether his sufferings are the result of a blind fate, or the hand of a Father who chastens for "our profit,"—of a great Physician who hurts that he may heal.

Now let us turn and look at this world as it is—full of happiness and misery, good and evil, pure aspiration, degraded desire. Let us look at the round of life and death; the very constitution of the world involving Sacrifice; each life living on the sacrifice of other lives, and falling itself a sacrifice to others—if to nothing else, to hordes of germs of disease and decay: and let us note that the fundamental belief of mankind has always been that the unseen war of happiness and misery, of good and evil, has *some* connection with the visible warfare of life and death—that there is a connection, not simple, but fundamental, between life and good and death and evil.

The warfare of life and death is seen only in fragments, but it is visible; the invisible agents of death only need a stronger microscope to become visible. But the spiritual warfare is not so; it needs, to use a much-condemned phrase, "spiritual discernment" to understand this warfare and its conditions. Now, it would be against all common sense to suppose that every nation and every man possessed this one quality in the same degree, and that, with this one faculty, exercise and training of it counts for nothing. On the contrary, history shows that, just as the Greeks as a nation possessed a high degree of artistic perception, so the Jews possessed, as a nation, a pre-eminent faculty of spiritual perception, though no one could assert that other races had been without it.

Turn back now from the facts of the world to the question which the

religious consciousness of all nations has attempted to answer. In view of this natural and spiritual warfare, in view of all the contradictions of good and evil, aspiration and failure, happiness and misery, which the world exhibits, is it possible to hold this hope—that the spirit of man is in contact with an Infinite Personality, and is this Personality a Divine Father, a God of Love?

See how vast the issues are. Imagine the possibility that Mr. Blatchford is right, and that a humane and civilised nation *could* arise, when Christianity had been discarded, still he admits that all the sin and misery of past years remain uncompensated—all the pain, past and future, of the Creation of the suffering creatures as well as of man. What does this mean to us? All who have had experience of life know the pang: "If only such an one could have tasted real happiness again before death—if only such a little pitiful child's life need not have struggled through some years of pain and then have flickered and died out." Mr. Blatchford gleefully throws back this difficulty on us—it belongs to our religion, not his. We accept it; only Christianity can teach that the pain is not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed.

Apart from religion, there is no Atonement, he assures us. We know it. Sin remains sin to all eternity, justice and mercy are unreconciled. "If only I had not inflicted this pain by unkindness—if only that life had not fallen under the shadow of some sin."

Religion alone can help us to see how the principle of sacrifice which we see unconscious in creation—which we trace higher in conscious men and women, the voluntary self-sacrifice of a mother, a friend, reclaiming and restoring—how this principle of sacrifice, growing into a law of redeeming love, is the principle of the Universe; then only we understand how the burden of

sin may be lifted, and the sinner raised, through forgiveness, above the level from which he fell.

For as, supremely among nations, the Jewish history taught the world to look to the Divine Father, so, greatest of all personalities, the personality of Jesus Christ gives the answer to the riddle of the Universe. No sane historic critic doubts that we have in the New Testament, among many shifting or doubtful points, the picture of a life and character which has supremely influenced history. Every time we date a letter we are reminded that the whole civilised world reckons its years by the life of a young artisan who died as a common criminal. If Mr. Blatchford is in search of a credible miracle, here is one he has got to believe.

How did Jesus of Nazareth answer this question, and in what circumstance? Not ordering his Edicts to be

engraved on the rock, nor writing his philosophic books, like the King Asoka and the calm Emperor to whom Mr. Blatchford directs our attention as surer examples, but in a life of struggle; in the death of a malefactor; in the agonies of a crucifixion, without even the dignity of quiet, which we accord to our worst criminals; in the sight of enemies mocking, in the absence of friends who had fled, denied, betrayed. It was with no ignorance of the world, its suffering, its evil, even no stoical hardening of the most compassionate heart in the world against suffering; but in the full reception of it, that Jesus died, commending His spirit to His *Father*.

In fact, there is one thing Mr. Blatchford has forgotten in his study of Christian ethics, Christian Churches, and Christianity; and that is the consideration of Christ.

II.—MIRACLES AND MODERN CIVILISATION

G. K. CHESTERTON

MR. BLATCHFORD has summed up all that is important in his whole position in three sentences. They are perfectly honest and clear. Nor are they any the less honest and clear because the first two of them are falsehoods and the third is a fallacy. He says "The Christian denies the miracles of the Mahomedan. The Mahomedan denies the miracles of the Christian. The Rationalist denies all miracles alike."

The historical error in the first two remarks I will deal with shortly. I confine myself for the moment to the courageous admission of Mr. Blatchford that the Rationalist denies all miracles alike. He does not question them. He does not pretend to be agnostic about them. He does not suspend

his judgment until they shall be proved. He denies them.

Faced with this astounding dogma I asked Mr. Blatchford why he thought miracles would not occur. He replied that the Universe was governed by laws. Obviously this answer is of no use whatever. For we cannot call a thing impossible because the world is governed by laws, unless we know what laws. Does Mr. Blatchford know all about all the laws in the Universe? And if he does not know about the laws how can he possibly know anything about the exceptions?

For, obviously, the mere fact that a thing happens seldom, under odd circumstances and with no explanation within our knowledge, is no proof that it is against natural law. That would

apply to the Siamese twins, or to a new comet, or to radium three years ago.

The philosophical case against miracles is somewhat easily dealt with. There is no philosophical case against miracles. There are such things as the laws of Nature rationally speaking. What everybody knows is this only. That there is repetition in nature. What everybody knows is that pumpkins produce pumpkins. What nobody knows is why they should not produce elephants and giraffes.

There is one philosophical question about miracles and only one. Many able modern Rationalists cannot apparently even get it into their heads. The poorest lad at Oxford in the Middle Ages would have understood it. (Note. As the last sentence will seem strange in our "enlightened" age I may explain that under "the cruel reign of mediæval superstition," poor lads were educated at Oxford to a most reckless extent. Thank God, we live in better days.)

The question of miracles is merely this. Do you know why a pumpkin goes on being a pumpkin? If you do not, you cannot possibly tell whether a pumpkin could turn into a coach or couldn't. That is all.

All the other scientific expressions you are in the habit of using at breakfast are words and winds. You say "It is a law of nature that pumpkins should remain pumpkins." That only means that pumpkins generally do remain pumpkins, which is obvious; it does not say why. You say "Experience is against it." That only means, "I have known many pumpkins intimately and none of them turned into coaches."

There was a great Irish Rationalist of this school (possibly related to Mr. Lecky), who when he was told that a witness had seem him commit murder said that he could bring a hundred witnesses who had not seen him commit it.

You say "The modern world is

against it." That means that a mob of men in London and Birmingham, and Chicago, in a thoroughly pumpkiny state of mind, cannot work miracles by faith.

You say "Science is against it." That means that so long as pumpkins are pumpkins their conduct is pumpkiny, and bears no resemblance to the conduct of a coach. That is fairly obvious.

What Christianity says is merely this. That this repetition in Nature has its origin not in a thing resembling a law but a thing resembling a will. Of course its phase of a Heavenly Father is drawn from an earthly father. Quite equally Mr. Blatchford's phase of a universal law is a metaphor from an Act of Parliament. But Christianity holds that the world and its repetition came by will or Love as children are begotten by a father, and therefore that other and different things might come by it. Briefly, it believes that a God who could do anything so extraordinary as making pumpkins go on being pumpkins, is like the prophet, Habbakuk, *Capable de tout*. If you do not think it extraordinary that a pumpkin is always a pumpkin, think again. You have not yet even begun philosophy. You have not even seen a pumpkin.

The historic case against miracles is also rather simple. It consists of calling miracles impossible, then saying that no one but a fool believes impossibilities: then declaring that there is no wise evidence on behalf of the miraculous. The whole trick is done by means of leaning alternately on the philosophical and historical objection. If we say miracles are theoretically possible, they say, "Yes, but there is no evidence for them." When we take all the records of the human race and say, "Here is your evidence," they say, "But these people were superstitious, they believed in impossible things."

The real question is whether our little Oxford Street civilisation is certain to be right and the rest of the

world certain to be wrong. Mr. Blatchford thinks that the materialism of nineteenth century Westerns one of their noble discoveries. I think it is as dull as their coats, as dirty as their streets, as ugly as their trousers, and as stupid as their industrial system.

Mr. Blatchford himself, however, has summed up perfectly his pathetic faith in modern civilisation. He has written a very amusing description of how difficult it would be to persuade an English judge in a modern law court of the truth of the Resurrection. Of course he is quite right; it would be impossible. But it does not seem to occur to him that we Christians may not have such an extravagant reverence for English judges as is felt by Mr. Blatchford himself.

The experiences of the Founder of Christianity have perhaps left us in a vague doubt of the infallibility of courts of law. I know quite well that nothing would induce a British judge to believe that a man had risen from the dead. But then I know quite as well that a very little while ago nothing would have induced a British judge to believe that a Socialist could be a good man. A judge would refuse to believe in new spiritual wonders. But this would not be because he was a judge, but because he was, besides being a judge, an English gentleman, a modern Rationalist, and something of an old fool.

And Mr. Blatchford is quite wrong in supposing that the Christian and the Moslem deny each other's miracles. No religion that thinks itself true bothers

about the miracles of another religion. It denies the doctrines of the religion; it denies its morals; but it never thinks it worth while to deny its signs and wonders.

And why not? Because these things some men have always thought possible. Because any wandering gipsy may have psychical powers. Because the general existence of a world of spirits and of strange mental powers is a part of the common sense of all mankind. The Pharisees did not dispute the miracles of Christ; they said they were worked by devilry. The Christians did not dispute the miracles of Mahomed. They said they were worked by devilry. The Roman world did not deny the possibility that Christ was a God. It was far too enlightened for that.

In so far as the Church did (chiefly during the corrupt and sceptical eighteenth century) urge miracles as a reason for belief, her fault is evident: but it is not what Mr. Blatchford supposes. It is not that she asked men to believe anything so incredible; it is that she asked men to be converted by anything so commonplace.

What matters about a religion is not whether it can work marvels like any ragged Indian conjurer, but whether it has a true philosophy of the Universe. The Romans were quite willing to admit that Christ was a God. What they denied was that He was the God—the highest truth of the cosmos. And this is the only point worth discussing about Christianity.

THE EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION

THE HON. AND REV. J. G. ADDERLEY

I.

It would probably be allowed by most people that if Christ did actually rise from the dead on the third day, Christians have an overwhelming evidence of the truth of their religion. Few would find it difficult to believe in the claims made by and for Christ, if it were established beyond doubt that He rose again.

I want, therefore, to show that it is quite certain that within a very short time after the death of Christ there were a considerable number of persons who were sure that He did rise again, and that upon that certainty they pinned their faith, altered their way of living, and founded a society, and that from that time onwards there has been a continued increase of that society built on that same foundation, and that the witness to the fact of the Resurrection has gone on among all nations up to the present day.

If this be true, I venture to suggest that those who reject the Christian religion are bound to pay more attention to the evidences of the Resurrection than they seem inclined to do, and to give us, who are believers in Christ, a better answer to our proposition than they have hitherto vouchsafed. At least, we claim that our belief is perfectly reasonable, and founded on good evidence of truth.

The task for critical unbelievers is not to explain away the fact of the Resurrection so much as to explain away the belief of the fact. Before

you proceed to explain that Christ never did rise again, you are bound, it seems to me, to explain how it was that at a certain period, immediately after His death, a large number of persons believed that He had risen again, if so be He did not do so.

To begin with, the earliest evidence of this belief in the Resurrection is not in the four Gospels, but in some of the Letters of St. Paul. It is admitted by nearly all the critics of high repute that at least four of St. Paul's letters are genuine documents, written by him about the year A.D. 57. These four letters are the Epistle to the Romans, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Galatians.

In these four letters it is made quite certain—

(1) That St. Paul believed that Christ rose from the dead.

(2) That ordinary Christians of that period (viz., 22 years after Christ's death) believed that Christ rose from the dead (and that it is morally certain that they believed it very much earlier, viz., five or six years after His death).

(3) That belief in Christ's Resurrection was regarded as an essential part of Christianity.

(4) That some of the most characteristic doctrines of Christianity were founded upon the fact of the Resurrection, which Christians believed, or were indissolubly connected with it.

Let us take each of these points in turn. First:

That St. Paul believed that Christ rose from the dead.

Nobody doubts the existence of St. Paul, nor the fact of his conversion from being a strict Jew to being a most enthusiastic believer in Jesus Christ, and one of the greatest, if not the greatest, and most influential preachers of Christianity that the Church has ever produced. Did he believe that Christ rose from the dead? No reasonable man can read these undoubted letters without allowing that he most certainly did. The next two points I will take together, viz.:

That ordinary Christians of that period (viz., 22 years after Christ's death) believed that Christ rose from the dead. That belief in Christ's Resurrection was regarded as an essential part of Christianity.

In connection with this, it is well to study carefully St. Paul's arguments in 1 Cor. xv. And, first, note that St. Paul is not arguing with people who denied Christ's Resurrection; he is arguing with people who were beset with doubts as to whether anyone could rise from the dead. This is most important. I have met people who completely missed the point of his argument, because they thought he was arguing to prove that Christ rose from the dead. He takes for granted that his readers, "ordinary Christians," all believed that Christ rose from the dead. Then he proceeds to argue that because they believed that Christ rose from the dead, they ought not to find any difficulty in believing that human beings may rise also. That this is his argument no one can doubt who reads.

The fourth point is this;

That some of the most characteristic doctrines of Christianity were founded upon the fact of the Resurrection, which Christians believed, or were indissolubly connected with it.

In proving this we are, to a certain extent, hampered by the vague idea that many people have as to what the characteristic doctrines of Christianity are.

For example, some people think that Christianity means "doing to others as you would be done by." Now, though this most excellent doctrine is true, and though it has certainly received a tremendous incentive from Christianity, it is not exactly a characteristic doctrine of our religion. By a characteristic doctrine I mean a doctrine which bears the character or impress of Christ, a doctrine which, in fact, men have come to believe through Christ, and which as far as we can see, men would not have believed if Christ had never existed or taught men.

Examples of such doctrines are as follows:

That, in some mysterious way, the death of Christ on the Cross is a means by which men can approach God more freely, and be forgiven their sins.

That men can be united to Christ, and can share His life.

That Christ is the head of a new race of men, who are by Him redeemed or delivered from sin, justified or accepted by God.

That Christ is Himself in a unique relationship to God, and is rightly called in a unique way the Son of God.

That there is such a thing as a "spiritual body."

I am not attempting here to explain these doctrines or to prove them even reasonable. I am only concerned to show that, being characteristic doctrines of Christianity, they were bound up with a belief in the Resurrection, and this at a very early period of Christian history. If this be the case, there is at least a very strong presumption that people believed in the Resurrection before they believed in the doctrines.

It is difficult to see how the doctrines could have arisen, still more difficult to see how people could have been induced to believe in them, if, first of all, they had not good grounds for believing that Christ rose from the dead.

This point, again, can easily be proved from the four undoubted letters of St. Paul. Read especially Rom. i.

4, iv. 24-25, v. 10, vi. 5 and 9, vii. 4, viii. 1 and 34, x. 9, xiv. 9, 1 Cor. vi. 14, xv. 3-4.

Now, it may be said that I have only shown that St. Paul and his personal followers believed that Christ rose again, and that perhaps, the other Apostles did not so believe. I will, therefore, show that there is very good ground for holding that this belief was the universal belief of Christians from the very beginning. Even now I do not propose to use any documents but the four undoubted letters of St. Paul. Especially I will call your attention to the Epistle to the Galatians. To understand the force of this argument, it is well to remember that St. Paul was the object of attack from certain Jewish Christians who disliked his attitude of generous goodwill towards the Gentiles. These enemies of his were continually trying to discredit his authority as an Apostle.

It is, therefore, morally certain that if they had been able to show that his teaching about Christ's Resurrection was contrary to the teaching of the rest of the Apostles and the current belief of Christians, they would have done so. Nowhere in the New Testament is there a vestige of such an attempt at exposure. Many other things were alleged against St. Paul by his enemies, but never this. Yet nothing could have been more damning as an accusation if it could have been made and proved. So far from this, St. Paul was able to show that in all essential points he was absolutely at one with the other Apostles.

A study of the first two chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians shows us that St. Paul's "gospel" was substantially the same as that preached and taught in the Jerusalem Church by the chief Apostles of Christ within a very short time of the Crucifixion. In the first place, St. Paul considered it absolutely vital that there should be but one Gospel, or message of Christian truth, taught and believed. "As

we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 8-9).

Now, what is this Gospel which St. Paul considers so essential that at all costs it must be maintained whole and complete, and untampered with? It undoubtedly includes the Resurrection. The very first verse of this Epistle refers to it: "Paul an Apostle: not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, *who raised Him from the dead*" (Gal. i. 1).

There are two notes of time in these chapters which go to prove that this Gospel of St. Paul's was the same as that which had been believed from the very beginning. I adopt the chronology of Dr. Harnack, as given in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, lest it should be said that I am giving fancy dates, or dates from too orthodox sources. The earliest date supposed for the Crucifixion is 29 A.D., and for the conversion of St. Paul A.D. 30.

In the eighteenth verse of the first chapter of the Galatians, St. Paul writes that immediately after his conversion (viz., in A.D. 30) he went into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Then, after "three years," which we may call A.D. 35 (about), he went up to Jerusalem, and stayed with St. Peter for fifteen days. He also saw "James, the Lord's brother," at that time, who was probably the president of the Christian Church at Jerusalem.

Now, it is of the highest importance for our argument to notice the attitude of these two great Christian leaders towards St. Paul. We must remember that there was every reason for them to have some uneasy suspicion about St. Paul, who very shortly before had been a persecutor of the Church. Nevertheless, he says, "They glorified God in me" (Gal. i. 24).

Is it conceivable that they would have glorified God in St. Paul if they had found him preaching a different

Gospel from their own on the subject of the Resurrection? We may conclude, then, that it is practically undeniable that in the year 35 A.D., perhaps earlier—that is to say, about five or six years after the death of Christ on the Cross—we have the leaders of the Church in the principal seat of Christianity (Jerusalem) teaching that Christ had been raised from the dead.

This evidence is corroborated by the second chapter of the Epistle, for there we find St. Paul describing another visit to Jerusalem "fourteen years after," which may mean A.D. 44 (and cannot well be later than A.D. 47), in which visit he has the same experience. This time he meets St. John, as well as the other two leaders, whom he calls "pillars" of the Church. He goes there for the express purpose of comparing notes with them as to the Gospel he was preaching. "I went up by revelation," he says, "and communicated unto them the Gospel which I preached among the Gentiles . . . lest by any means I should run or had run in vain."

It is true that the particular point in the "Gospel" about which he wished to consult the leaders was not the Resurrection, but some matters as between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. But it is simply impossible to hold that if the "pillars" of the Church had found St. Paul unsound on the subject of the Resurrection they would have accepted him or co-operated with him. Yet, whatever differences they had concerning Jews and Gentiles, there is not a breath of any controversy as to the main doctrine of the Church, namely, the Resurrection. On the contrary they gave St. Paul "the right hand of fellowship" (Gal. ii. 9).

The evidence, then, of this second chapter practically seals the evidence of the first chapter that in the Jerusalem Church there was no discordant note in the chorus of witness to the

Resurrection of Christ, and this within a very few years of the Crucifixion.

We have evidence, then, of the faith in the Resurrection at four distinct dates, at least, namely A.D. 57, the approximate date of the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians; A.D. 51, the approximate date of the visit of St. Paul to Corinth, when he taught them the Gospel of the Resurrection, to which he refers in his Epistle; A.D. 47 or 44, the date referred to in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians; and A.D. 35 or 33, the date referred to in the first chapter. If, as is practically certain, the death of Christ on the Cross took place in A.D. 29 or 30 (which no one doubts except those very few persons who doubt the existence of Christ altogether), we have evidence that within at the most twenty-eight years, and at the least four years, the Resurrection belief had grown up.

Now try and realise what a very short time this is for a belief to have grown up. Ask yourself whether it is credible that such a belief could have grown up so quickly—a belief which has never languished from that day to this—without any foundation in fact?

Suppose the existence of a vigorous society in the year 1904, whose founder died on a cross in the year 1876, whose leading tenet, for which they are prepared to die, is that their founder rose from the dead a few hours after his death. Suppose, too, that there is documentary evidence, which even the society's enemies do not gainsay, that in the year 1880 the leaders and the rank and file of that society held just the same belief that they do now in 1904, and you have some idea of the strength of the orthodox case for the Resurrection of Christ.

Has there ever been an instance in history of a belief having grown up

among any large number of persons, practically uncontradicted, within a few years of the alleged event, which event has been shown to have never taken place? The history of Francis of Assisi is sometimes compared with the history of the early Church, and an examination of that history is certainly very suggestive by way of comparison, and tells greatly in favour of the Christian case for the Resurrection. The followers of Francis wrote the story of his life within a very short time of his death. This story has been subjected lately to very searching criticism on the most approved modern methods (for example, by the Protestant historian, Paul Sabatier), and while some small details are doubted by competent critics, the main facts of his life, including some marvellous miracles, are accepted as proved. The united contemporary evidence of belief in these events, and the existence of a society living a particular kind of life avowedly based on that belief, is accounted sufficient proof that the events really took place.

Let the same sort of criticism be applied, frankly and honestly, to the contemporary evidence of early Christian belief, and we are confident that the result must be in our favour.

As a matter of fact, it is this kind of criticism which is going on among the more learned and serious students of Christianity. It is only the popular Secularist lecturer who is not (as a rule) a student, who will not face the fact of early Christian belief, and try to account for it. He prefers to ignore it, and to deal with the Resurrection as a miracle that could not possibly have happened. He still goes on scoffing at the Resurrection in Hyde Park, relying on the ignorance of the multitude whom he addresses.

My object is to bring "the man in the street" into line with the serious student on this question. The student has long ago admitted that "some-

thing happened" which led the early Christians to believe that Christ rose from the dead. He is now occupying himself with trying to explain that belief. Read, for example, the deliberate opinion of "J. W. S." (Professor Schmiedel), the writer of the article on the Resurrection in the "Encyclopædia Biblica," a book which belongs to the school of the most advanced critics. He frankly allows that "the followers of Jesus really had the impression of having seen Him." St. Paul certainly, and without doubt, says that Christ "was seen" by him. Those who deny this are not looked upon as serious. "The historian," writes "J. W. S.," "who will have it that the alleged appearances are due merely to legend or to invention must deny not only the genuineness of the Pauline Epistles, but also the historicity of Jesus altogether."

"It is undeniable that the Church was founded not directly upon the fact of the Resurrection of Christ, but upon the belief in His Resurrection."

It is well to press this home on the deniers of the Resurrection. The advanced critics declare that you cannot attribute the story of the Resurrection appearances to legend or invention, without denying that Jesus Christ ever existed. Are you prepared to go to the length of denying Jesus Christ's existence as an historical character? If not, you must at least join the critics, and try to explain the origin of the belief in those appearances.

II

Let us now proceed to consider the explanations which have been given, and see if they will stand the test of serious consideration.

Two facts then are practically allowed universally. First, that Jesus "was

seen." Second, that the Church was founded on the belief that He had been seen. Can this belief be explained if He did not really rise from the dead?

Once more, before we give the "explanations," it should be understood that the tendency among the extreme critics now is to deny the authenticity of the Gospel narrative, and to deal with St. Paul's epistles alone. They allow that if the Gospel story is genuine, it must be granted that "revivification" is the only explanation. This means that it is only by rejecting the Gospel narrative that you can take refuge in theories about "subjective visions," &c. This again is a large order, and shows the difficulty in which critics of this kind are placed.

1. The first explanation is that a fraud was perpetrated. The Body of Christ was removed from the sepulchre, and it was announced that He had risen again. There can be little doubt that the Tomb was empty, and for this reason. No one denies the substantial accuracy of the story in the Acts of what happened in the early days of the Church, within a very short time after the Death of Christ. The disciples came out among the people full of hope and confidence and enthusiasm, actively engaged in starting a new society based on the belief that Jesus was risen from the dead. They were opposed by the authorities in Jerusalem, especially by the Sadducees, who did not believe in any Resurrection.

Obviously, the best way to have silenced the disciples and proved them liars would have been to go to the Tomb and produce the dead body of Christ. This was not done. On the contrary, they made an official announcement that the disciples had stolen the body, thereby becoming unwilling witnesses to an awkward fact that the Tomb was empty. This official report (referred to independently of the Gospels by Justin Martyr) is strong evidence that there was a

mysterious fact which required explanation. The explanation given by the disciples was that the Lord had risen. Would anyone have listened to this if there had not been good ground for believing that the Tomb was really empty? Of course, to us Christians it would also be quite inconceivable that the disciples could have gone about preaching a religion of Truth at the risk of their lives, knowing that they were palming off a fraud.

This argument may not be convincing to one who thinks so badly of Christianity as Mr. Blatchford, but to most of us (including Agnostics) it is a strong argument.

It should also be noted here that Mr. Blatchford's idea that the Apostles were "interested persons," is absurd. They did not get £15,000 a year for saying that Christ was alive. They were accused of being mad and drunk. They were flogged, stoned, and decapitated.

We are not surprised to find that nobody of any eminence attempts nowadays to explain the belief by the fraud argument.

2. Secondly, it has been asserted that perhaps Jesus did not really die but only swooned, that His body was buried, but that on Easter Day He recovered from his swoon (some say, aided by the smell of the spices !), and emerged from the Tomb.

Many questions at once suggest themselves in criticism of this. What became of Him afterwards? When did He really die? Do His alleged appearances after the Crucifixion sound at all like the appearances of a poor emaciated man, half-dead, just recovered from the terrible physical and mental experiences of Gethsemane and Calvary? Moreover, all the fraudulent character of the announcement made by the disciples would in this case remain as real as in the case of the alleged deception, with this inconceivable addition that Christ Himself, the universally acknowledged Type of

Human Holiness, would have been an accessory and party to the lie.

Again, it is not surprising to find that sober critics have given up this explanation.

3. We now come to the theory of Visions which holds the field among modern deniers of the saying that "Jesus Christ rose with His Body." This theory takes many forms. Some say the Visions were objective, some that they were subjective. This again lands us in difficulties, because it is not quite clear what the words "objective" and "subjective" exactly imply.

It has been said that there was a gradual "spiritualisation" of Christ's Body. If this be true it does not involve the denial that the rising again of His body did take place.

It has again been said that the Resurrection was nothing more than the revival of His active energising Spirit among His disciples. But this leaves unexplained the disappearance of His body from the Tomb, and does not agree with St. Paul's Corinthian argument.

The theory of an objective Vision is propounded in various ways. It has been argued that God sent a kind of "telegram from Heaven" giving the disciples an objective manifestation of Christ to show them that He was still alive. It seems extraordinary that this should be looked upon as less miraculous and difficult of credence than the orthodox views of a bodily Resurrection. It is, moreover, a great concession, for it allows that the disciples did actually look with their eyes upon something that God intended them to understand was really the risen living Christ. It is, however, unsatisfactory for the same reasons as the last explanation with which we have dealt. It leaves unanswered the questions about the empty Tomb.

The idea that the Visions were subjective is most difficult to comprehend. A subjective vision is said to be "the product of the mental condition of the

seer." That such visions have taken place in history it would be impossible to disprove. Saints such as St. Teresa and St. Francis of Assisi have declared that they have "seen the Lord," and it is quite likely that their visions were the product of their mental condition. Nevertheless, even in those cases, it would be equally impossible to say that the visions were not "objectively real." But one can hardly say that the Gospel stories of Christ's appearances, notably those to the disciples on the way to Emmaus and to St. Thomas, can be accounted for by the mental condition of the seers. Everything points the other way.

But it may be said, "There is doubt about the authenticity of the Gospel narrative, and you must confine yourself to St. Paul." Very well. Is it tenable that St. Paul's list of witnesses is a list of witnesses whose mental condition was likely to have produced in them a subjective vision? This could hardly have been the case at least with "500 brethren at once." It is true that St. Paul claims to have seen visions at times in his life, but his allusions to his own sight of Christ and to the appearance in the Corinthian list would not lead an unprejudiced reader to suppose that he considered the Easter visions to be of the same order. In the fifteenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, he is clearly arguing about a bodily Resurrection and not about a mere ghostly appearance, still less of a subjective imagination.

4. There remains one more "explanation." It is put in various ways, but it amounts to this. That the disciples could not believe it possible that Jesus should really die. Death could have no dominion over such a Life as His, as they had come to know it by living with Him. Therefore they instinctively refused to believe He was dead, and affirmed that He was alive. True, He had been crucified and buried, but His very death, so great and glorious as a

Martyrdom for Truth, was such that the fact of it was overwhelmed by the conviction that His life in the highest sense had never really ended, but had passed into the eternal sphere where He Himself thus remains alive for evermore.

Such an idea renders it less and less important for us to worry ourselves about such minor details as to whether the grave was empty or not on Easter morning, or whether the disciples were liars or mistaken. All such trivialities are swallowed up in the vastly more important soul-inspiring fact that He certainly lives now in the hearts and consciences of millions.

"The Resurrection of Christ," writes Pfeiderer, "has no longer for the religious intelligence the significance of a merely single external and individual event, but becomes the beginning of a continuous creative process in the community, and of the working of that life-giving principle which the community has in common with Christ."¹

I own I do not exactly know what this means, but I would ask Professor Pfeiderer two questions. Does it or does it not matter for us to know whether the "external and individual event" happened or not? Is it not of importance for us who accept the teaching of the Apostles to be sure that this "external event" upon which they certainly based their teaching really took place?

Dr. Harnack bids us distinguish between the "Easter Faith" and the "Easter Message." The "Easter Faith" is the conviction "that Jesus in Whose soul was eternal life still lives with God."

The "Easter Message" is the story of the empty grave and the appearances.

The former we are to accept; the latter we are told to reject.

The Abbé Loisy tells us that we should accept the distinction, and per-

haps we should do so. But what we cannot agree to do is to reject the "Message" and try to retain the "Faith." Was there any such distinction in the minds of the Apostles? Our Lord, it is true, commended those who having not seen yet believed, but He remonstrated with St. Thomas for not having accepted the "Easter Message."

Is there anything to show that the "Easter Faith" arose in any one's mind apart from the "Easter Message"?

St. Paul "saw" Christ presumably before he believed. It was in every case the fact that Christ was said to have actually risen that awakened in the minds of the disciples the "Easter Faith."

The point we are discussing, and which we must press home is this. Is the "Easter Message" true in fact or not?

No doubt there are beautiful spiritual ideas connected with this Easter faith and we do not want to minimise their importance. But still the old question turns up for settlement. Did Christ rise again in the way in which the disciples believed that He did? Would there, in fact, have been any "Easter Faith" then, would there be any now, if Christ had not risen again?

For the "Easter Faith" is not merely that Christ's memory and influence still live, but the assertion that He personally "lives and intercedes for us and pleads with us, and gives us His strength, and that in Him we live also."¹ This is the only "Easter Faith" known to history, and it is a faith dependent upon the truth of the "Easter Message."

From what we have written it will be seen that, roughly speaking, modern critics are practically agreed not to combat the belief in the Resurrection by repeating the old parrot cry, "Miracles do not happen," and there-

¹ Pfeiderer, "Paulinism," *Eng. Trans.* Lond. 1873, p. 121.

¹ Bishop Robinson, *Critical Questions*, p. 117 (Brown, Langham & Co.).

fore that Christ could not have risen again, but rather to explain that He must have risen non-miraculously. "We must explain these things," said M. Renan once to a friend of his. I would ask my readers to study carefully all the explanations; and ask themselves whether they are really satisfactory to reasonable men.

I must now consider briefly the argument against the Resurrection from the alleged discrepancies in the Gospel narratives. I have left this to the last for two reasons. First because I have been trying to show that apart from the Gospel narrative altogether the case of the Church is strong enough. Second, because by confusing the two sources of evidence one is open to the retorts of the man who starts by denying the authenticity of the Gospel narrative *in toto* while allowing the authenticity of St. Paul.

In considering the alleged discrepancies we should start by realising that even if they were all proved to exist they do not touch the main question concerning the early Christian belief that Christ rose, and how to account for it. It would be allowed that the early Christian belief was a belief in one single fact that Christ rose. The value of the Gospel narrative is corroborative, not primary. It might shake our faith in the general trustworthiness of the Gospels if we found that the details of Christ's appearances were unhistorical. But it would not affect in the slightest degree our conviction that the early Christian belief in His Resurrection was founded on fact.

In any other matter ordinary people would, I think, be quite ready to admit that discrepancies in the stories of an event, especially when the stories are told by excited people at a time of unparalleled emotion, do not at all affect our belief in the event itself. My readers will remember the tragic occurrence of a fire at Eton College, in the year 1903. A perusal of the news-

paper accounts, some of them accounts of eye-witnesses, would show at once how easily discrepancies may arise within a few hours of an event in the stories that people tell of it. Yet nobody doubted that the house was burnt. It was not necessary for the readers of the newspapers to travel down to Eton to assure themselves that a fire had actually taken place.

Doubtless, it will be said by some that the Resurrection is a matter of far greater importance than a fire, and that we should expect much more cogent evidence for a fact of such importance, evidence without the suspicion which these discrepancies arouse in the minds of those called upon to believe the fact. But persons who would say that are, probably, those who have a wrong idea of the part which Holy Scripture plays in this matter of evidence. It is too often forgotten that the New Testament was originally put into the hands of those who already believed in the Resurrection of Christ. Those to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles already believed. As we have noticed, the force of his argument in the fifteenth chapter depends on this. He argues, that just because they believe in Christ's Resurrection they should have no difficulty in believing in the resurrection of the dead.

The Gospel narrative, therefore, which was written down probably years after the Epistle to the Corinthians, was never intended to be used as an evidence of the Resurrection. It was merely a collection of stories illustrative of the great fact which the readers already believed. The stories were narrated by different men, at different times, to different sets of Christians. The very fact that the four evangelists took no pains to make them harmonise is a proof that they had no intention either of presenting their readers with a body of strict evidence of the fact or of palming off a fraud on them.

We are at perfect liberty to consider that the alleged discrepancies weaken

the evidence, but we have no right to look upon them as destroying it. As I have said before, if every discrepancy were proved to be impossible of harmony, nay, if the Gospel narrative were entirely discredited, the argument for the fact of the Resurrection would remain as strong as ever. I do not, however, wish to disguise from my readers the fact that discrepancies are alleged to exist, but I am not at pains to harmonise them.

III

There remains one more subject with which my readers may feel that I ought to deal—the nature of Christ's Risen Body, and following from that the nature of the appearances during the forty days.

Are we, as Christians, committed to a belief in a bodily resurrection? To this I answer, "Yes, a resurrection in some true sense bodily." It will be remembered that I have already noted that some modern critics have rejected the Gospel narrative, saying that if it be accepted it must be allowed that the early Christians believed in the "revivification" of the crucified body of Jesus. But they accept St. Paul, and maintain that there is no evidence that he believed in a bodily resurrection. To sustain this assertion, they declare that St. Paul knew nothing of Christ's "eating and drinking," or being "touched" after He had risen. Nor, they say, did St. Paul know anything of an empty tomb. Now this "argument from silence," though a powerful one sometimes, is not by any means universally strong.

In this case it seems to be peculiarly inappropriate. For though it is true that at the beginning of the fifteenth chapter St. Paul speaks of appearances of Christ, without saying whether or not they were bodily appearances, he

goes on immediately afterwards to a carefully reasoned argument for the general resurrection of the body, in close connection with the Resurrection of Christ.

But while the Corinthian chapter seems to make it clear that St. Paul believed that Christ's Resurrection was a bodily resurrection, it does undoubtedly go to show that he believed that a very great change had come over His body. The imaginary question of the "foolish one": "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" may be asked in paraphrase by us concerning the Resurrection of Christ, and St. Paul's answer may be fairly guessed at. We may say, "How was Christ raised, and with what body did He come?" There can be little doubt of the Pauline reply. He would say: "His body was sown in dishonour, it was immediately raised in glory, it was sown in weakness, it was raised in power, it was raised a spiritual body. He is the last Adam who became a life-giving spirit. He is the second Man who is of Heaven." And this does not make St. Paul contradict the so-called "childish utterances" of the Gospels. On the contrary, it puts him in complete harmony with them. For they describe our Lord's risen body as having spiritual properties. It was suddenly manifested to His disciples, it was at times unrecognisable as at first on the way to Emmaus, it appeared and then vanished, and finally, it was taken up into the unseen sphere at what is called the "Ascension."

But you may say that Christ is above represented as having "eaten and drunk" after His Resurrection, as having shown to St. Thomas the marks of the nails in His hands and feet.

Even here the Gospels are not at variance with St. Paul. For writing of the risen body St. Paul says: "God giveth it a body even as it pleaseth Him." May we not believe that for the purpose of manifestation to the faithful disciples Christ took His body even as

it pleased Him, that He showed Himself alive, that by infallible proofs He made it clear that He was the same Jesus whom they had known before.

Even here on earth your body completely changes several times in your life, yet you call it your body, the same body at 50 years old as the body you had when a child. Why should it be difficult to call the glorified body of the risen Christ, changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," the same body as that which hung on the Cross of Calvary. I cannot explain the nature of Christ's risen body. No one can do that. No one now living on earth has had experience of a risen body. But there is nothing unreasonable in believing that "there is a spiritual body," and that our Lord's risen body was such. No doubt language has been used about His risen body which has not sufficiently emphasised its changed and spiritual condition to which the Gospels so markedly call attention. Much has been supposed concerning it, about which the Scriptures are quite silent. But we are committed to nothing beyond what they assert. We are not, for example, bound to hold that there was continuously throughout the forty days a certain superficial area upon which our Lord's feet rested. There is nothing again to suggest that He became visible to any besides those who believed on Him and loved Him.

It may be asked in conclusion why, holding such a view, an agnostic position you may call it, we are unable to be satisfied by the theory of Visions. The answer is that we do not object to a theory of Visions, but only to such a theory of visions as involves a denial of the empty tomb and makes the appearances nothing more than the apparitions of a ghost, and makes them prove nothing more than the "immortality of the Soul." The controversy is raging

around the question of the empty tomb. It is best for our case that it should, for, as we have seen, it is difficult to explain away the "Easter tidings." I cannot myself think that anyone can be justified in claiming to believe the article in the Creed who does not hold that on Easter morning the sepulchre was empty.

I have now finished my task and claim to have shown:—

(1) That on the evidence which even doubting critics do not deny there was a universal belief among Christians that Christ rose from the dead—and this within a very short time of His Death on Calvary.

(2) That the Christian religion was built upon this faith from the first.

(3) That the witness to it has continued ever since in the Church.

(4) That doubters are bound, as reasonable men, to try to account for this fact.

(5) That it is more reasonable to believe that this faith was founded on fact than to believe that the fact never occurred.

(6) That the explanations other than Catholic are not satisfactory and unwarranted by the evidence.

I have not dealt with Mr. Blatchford's imaginary "trial" of the evidence for the Resurrection. I cannot think that he (well read student as he claims to be) can really mean us to take it seriously. It is sufficient to remark that there are very few historical events that could be "proved" by Mr. Blatchford's method. Let him try to convince us after that method that Mr. Blatchford had a human great-grandfather.

For those who seriously desire to master the subject of the evidence for the Resurrection may I recommend Milligan's *Resurrection*; Latham's *The Risen Master*, and the article "Encyclopædia Biblica," by J. W. S.

XII

CAN MAN SIN AGAINST GOD?

- I.—DETERMINISM *Rev. F. R. Tennant*
II.—THE ETERNAL HEROISM OF THE SLUMS . . . *G. K. Chesterton*
III.—MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN ACTS . . . *Rev. Charles L. Marson*
IV.—THE WAY OUT FOR ALL *George Haw*

I.—DETERMINISM.

REV. F. R. TENNANT

MR. BLATCHFORD teaches that sin is impossible. God, he says, is responsible for man's acts because He made man. He asks: "Who is responsible for the quality or powers of a thing that is made?"

I should answer, surely all depends on the kind of *thing*. If the thing is a machine, or a bridge, to use Mr. Blatchford's illustration, certainly the maker is responsible. But if the thing be like God, a being endowed with a will of its own, the cause of its own acts, then surely the "thing" is responsible for its actions! Do we consider a father responsible for his wayward son's follies because he "made" him, or was the means of bringing him into existence?

It is absolutely essential, then, to Mr. Blatchford's whole argument that man is a will-less machine. He should, therefore, prove this, else all consequences deduced from it are baseless. But has he proved it? Certainly not. His chapter on Determinism offers no proof. He assumes it, he dogmatically asserts it, he is sure of it. His readers are not. And it is certainly not self-evident. If we have no will, no power to choose between alternative courses of action, we are assuredly under an illusion as to what seems the most vital element in our experience. And if we are under such an illusion, as to our will, which is our very self, our other faculties, as we call them, must be considered to be delusions, too; for the great majority of living psychologists assure us emphatically that will is inseparably blended with them.

The Determinist theory that we are will-less machines, then, is not self-evident. Nor, of course, is it one

which is universally accepted among philosophers, Christian or otherwise. It is not, I believe, one which finds very frequent support among living psychologists. And in the crude form in which Mr. Blatchford presents it to us, I doubt if it has ever been held by a philosopher.

The foundation-stone of Mr. Blatchford's doctrine of man, then, is an unproved assumption; and repetition of it in different words—*e.g.*, "man is" (solely) "a creature of heredity and environment" (page 139); or "The actions of a man's will are as mathematically fixed at his birth as are the motions of a planet" (page 136)—does not make it less a mere dogmatic assertion.

One is frequently astounded on reading *God and My Neighbour* at positive assertions of this kind as to matters of fact, which must be utterly misleading to readers whose education in abstruse subjects does not enable them to estimate their truth. The further dictum, "Motives are born of the brain," is not only an irresponsible assertion, but an absurd one, as his Huxley should have taught the writer.

The Christian believes that every human soul, when once "planted out" by God, is a finite copy of God in the sense that it possesses a will or power to "cause" its own acts, and to thwart God's will or to obey it. He further believes that such Free Will is the source of all mortality, "of all that has worth or value in the world."

"Without it," continues the writer from whom the last words are quoted (Illingworth, *Reason and Revelation*, p. 224), "there will be no heroism, no idealism, no beauty of holiness, no self-

sacrificing love; man would have remained an animal, and history moved forward to no goal. Human life, therefore—with all that it stands for—could not have come into being without the possibility of sin.”

The production, then, of man in God's Universe introduced the *possibility* of sin. This, however, is by no means to say that it made sin a *necessity*, though Mr. Blatchford seems to identify the two things. He says (p. 132): “Then, if that power of choice given to him by God makes for evil, it follows that man must choose evil, since he has no other power of choice.”

It will have struck many of the readers of *God and My Neighbour* that there is a confusion in this sentence. We cannot in the same breath attribute to man a power of *choice*, and also declare that in virtue of it he *must* choose evil. Where “must” comes in “choice” goes out; they are incompatible. A power to choose evil is not the same thing as a powerlessness to choose the good; it implies a like power to choose the good.

This confusion underlies the whole argument (pp. 131-2) by which it is sought to prove that not man, but God, is to be blamed if man's “power to choose” chooses evil. Surely no amount of argumentation will suffice to prove that a man is *unable* to choose good because he *can* choose evil. As a matter of fact, he sometimes chooses the one and sometimes the other; and when he has chosen the bad he always feels perfectly certain afterwards that he could, if he had liked, have chosen better.

The analogy between a man and a bridge (which *must* break under a sufficiently great strain) is utterly unwarranted by our inmost experience.

Mr. Blatchford, even when using the word “will” in the sense of the power of a free agent to do what he likes, cannot liberate himself from his tendency to regard it as a manufactured, inanimate article, like a spring, which

must act in a certain way. He says (p. 132): “Then the blame must be God's, Who gave man a power of choice that *would* choose evil.”

The word “would,” which I have italicised, misrepresents the whole matter; it implies that man's will would, “of necessity,” choose evil, else the statement is valueless to his argument. But the believer in Free Will could not use such a word; he would say, of course, that God gave man a will that *might* (and, therefore, *might not*) choose evil. And whether such a will power were bestowed upon man by God, or whether man made or acquired it himself, it would, of course, equally throw the responsibility of a choice on the man. It is, once bestowed upon him, his very own, and no longer God's. There is nothing incongruous in believing that God can bestow some of His own independence and power of initiative on man; that God can make a free agent like Himself, only finite.

It should be plain, then, that if will *is* a real power of independent choice, the responsibility for its exercise belongs to its owner, not to its owner's maker. God is responsible for the possibility of sin, but not for its actuality.

I have not, of course, attempted to prove the doctrine of Free Will. Considering that it is a problem which has exercised the ablest minds of all ages, it would be absurd to do so. I am content to say that the opposite view has not been proved, and, therefore, that it cannot be assumed as final; that the view which regards the will as free, and its freedom as the very essence of the self, accords much better with our experience, and can only be avoided by assuming what seems to us our most real experience to be a delusion; that when philosophers have denied Free Will, they have done so in the interests of a system which logically required it, and not because of its own absurdity or impossibility; and that, since Materialism has become practic-

ally a defunct system, the great reason for adopting Determinism has been removed.

One might say, further, that the view to which the Determinist is committed—that man is solely a creature of heredity and environment—does not suffice to explain common facts. Have none of us known a person born with irritable nerves, or a tendency to sensual pleasure, or with a timidity which shrinks excessively from danger or pain, who has, by effort and self-discipline, become placid in temper, strictly temperate and pure, bold to bear and dare anything when duty called to it? I have certainly known such.

Heredity *can* be conquered. Have none of us known persons born and bred in squalid slums, surrounded with drunkenness, filthy language, dishonesty, and immorality, who in spite of their very homes, have maintained their innocence from all these vices? I certainly have known such.

Environment does not always determine character. The swinish sot might remain a sot if you put him into a palace—perhaps would become a greater sot.

Our knowledge of men makes the attempt to explain character *wholly* by heredity and environment appear ridiculously too easy.

Again, the Determinist, who denies freedom of will and the possibility of self-determination to wickedness, is driven to believe, as Mr. Blatchford says he believes, that vices and evil acts are due to ignorance or mental disease. Again I appeal to our knowledge of the world. Does the murderer really not feel it is wrong to take another's life? If so, why does he sometimes, when he has effected his escape, give himself up to justice or commit suicide? Or is he insane? He is often clever and crafty enough, able to play a difficult game for months or years with calculated skill to encompass his end; and to call him insane is simply to rob words of their meaning.

But Mr. Blatchford does not believe in this theory which he takes so much trouble to make plausible. At any rate, he gives it away when he says (p. 144): "I believe that I am what heredity and environment made me. *But I know that I can make myself better or worse if I try.*"

Very good. That is sound sense, whatever we must say of his other statements, and it is all the believer in Free Will asks him to admit. If he can make himself better, and does not, then he can sin; sin is the failure to moralise one's instincts, tendencies, and desires.

I do not know whether the sentence which follows the one which I have quoted in italics is meant to qualify its admission; but, whether it is or is not meant to do so, it utterly falls short of such a result. It runs: "I know that, because I have learnt it, and the learning has been part of my environment."

Yes, the *learning* has—or, rather, the *teaching*—but it is not the learning that we have the power to better ourselves, but *the power itself*, which enables us to improve our character, surely. And this is not derived from environment; or even, if it is—it matters not whence it is derived—it is sufficient that it is now *ours*, and *we* are responsible for using it.

To return to the position at which we previously arrived: God is responsible for sin's possibility, not for its actual existence. To this the Christian is, at least, committed, and even this may be felt to involve a difficulty. For the question may still be put: Why did the Almighty produce a being which, through his capacity to sin, was able to bring so much misery upon the race? It is sometimes urged, as Mr. Blatchford's book suggests, that if God were Almighty, and foreknew the danger of creating a being which should have the power to sin, why did He not make man incapable of sinning?

This is not difficult to answer. Man *incapable* of sin would not be man:

would not be a moral being at all. Exclude the possibility of sin, and we exclude at the same time the possibility of holiness, of all moral worth, of all that gives man his dignity and greatness.

God could have made a world which should not have evolved man—which should have stopped at the highest beasts. But would such a world have been worthy of a God such as the Christian believes in—a world containing no rational being to understand and know and love and commune with its Creator? If such a being were to be forthcoming, and the world were not to be a mere mindless, non-moral machine, there must belong to him the power to go wrong; else there would be no virtue in going right. We do not attribute virtue to clocks, however correctly they keep time. Yet, with the incapacity to sin, man would be but a clock. So even God's "omnipotence" could not make man incapable of sin if man were to be a moral being bearing the image of his Maker. We must remember that omnipotence is not the power to realise a contradiction.

And this suggests another question, touched upon elsewhere in Mr. Blatchford's book, but closely connected with the present subject: the existence of physical pain throughout the world. Could not omnipotence have excluded this? Here, too, we are face to face with an enormously deep problem, and I can but suggest a possible answer.

We must remember that if the world was to be a "cosmos," capable of being understood and inhabited by a rational being such as man, the crown of the Creation, it must be a world ordered by law, and not governed by a series of disconnected and orderless miracles, which would baffle the intelligence of rational creatures. Things must have *fixed* properties, once and for all, given to them. Else there would be no "course of nature," and no human

activities would be possible. We should have no guarantee that if we sowed we should reap, or that, because a ship floated in the harbour, it would not promptly go down in the open sea.

Now, before a man allows himself to talk glibly of God's omnipotence, let him set himself to arrange for a law-governed, rational world, in which things have fixed properties and obey laws, a world which in course of time shall evolve men, and which shall, at the same time, be free of what we call "evils"—earthquakes, pestilences, and the suffering involved in the "survival of the fittest." Let a man even try to conceive such a world—one, at the same time, such as shall run its course without incessant miracle, and yet involve no contradictions. If he can do so, let him freely talk of the impossibility of God being a loving Father, remembering, once more, that almightiness does not include the power to realise a contradiction, to make two and two equal five.

May it not be that, granted the world is to be according to a certain definite plan and governed by definite laws (and so fitted for the home of rational and moral beings), it is impossible even to an all-knowing and all-powerful God, to provide such a world free from "evils"? Do not the "evils" spring from the self-same laws which, on the whole, minister to man's good and to his development? May not the evils be necessary *by-products*—i.e., things which are not ends in themselves, but the absolutely necessary outcome of any ordered world, such as ours, at all?

Till we can answer this with an absolute negative—and who can do so?—let us be silent as to the utter impossibility of calling this mixed world of ours the work of a benevolent and all-powerful God.

Mr. Blatchford's refutation of the Christian doctrine of sin, makes use of the Fall Story of Genesis. It seems to imply that we Christians are com-

mitted to the interpretation of it which he adopts for the purpose of his argument, viz., that it is to be taken as actual history. Now, he should have known better than to do this. The vast majority of theologians—I think I might venture to say practically all—do not regard the Fall Story as history, and certainly none need consider Christian theology to be based upon it. It is absurd to think you have demolished Christian theology when you have only demolished theories which educated Christians themselves have demolished. One must attack the defended citadel, not the pulled-down outworks, if one wishes for a real, and not a sham, victory.

I emphasise this point because the method of attack in question is characteristic, not only of the chapter of Mr. Blatchford's book with which I have been asked to deal, but of many parts of it. Much that is called "Christianity," because it has been, or is, taught by some Christian teachers, is not matter of revelation, but matter as to which opinions have differed, and still differ,

and, indeed, may legitimately differ; matter about which we come to know more as ordinary scientific knowledge increases. An attack on Christianity to-day ought not, in common fairness, to be levelled at obsolete theories of this kind, but at the beliefs of the best-informed and most generally recognised leaders of Christian thought.

What the beliefs of such writers are, however, Mr. Blatchford has obviously never tried to ascertain. Had he been acquainted with the very watchword of all recent Old Testament theology—"Progressive Revelation"—he could honestly have written scarce one of his first 72 pages.

Sin is, of course, sin, no matter how it first arose, nor how it propagated. It equally needs redemption, though certainly not in the sense in which redemption is represented in *God and My Neighbour*. Many of us have adopted evolutionary explanations of the origin and spread of sin, and find our Christian faith strengthened and illuminated by having done so.

II.—THE ETERNAL HEROISM OF THE SLUMS

G. K. CHESTERTON

I HAVE said it before, but it cannot be too often repeated, that what is the matter with Mr. Blatchford and his school is that they are not sceptical enough. For the really bold questions we have to go back to the Christian Fathers.

For example, Mr. Blatchford, in *God and My Neighbour*, does me the honour to quote from me as follows: "Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in defending Christianity, said, 'Christianity has committed crimes at which the sun might sicken in Heaven, and no one can refute the statement.'" I did say this, and I say

it again, but I said something else. I said that every great and useful institution had committed such crimes. And no one can refute THAT statement.

And why has every great institution been criminal? It is not enough to say "Christians persecuted; down with Christianity," any more than it is enough to say, "A Confucian stole my hair-brush; down with Confucianism." We want to know whether the reason for which the Confucian stole the hair-brush was a reason peculiar to the Confucians or a reason common to many other men.

It is obvious that the Christian's reason for torturing was a reason common to hosts of other men; it was simply the fact that he held his views strongly and tried unscrupulously to make them prevail. Any other man might hold any other views strongly and try unscrupulously to make them prevail. And when we look at the facts we find, as I say, that millions of other men do, and have done so from the beginning of the world.

Mr. Blatchford quoted the one exception of Buddhism which never persecuted politically. This is, if ever there was one, an exception that proves the rule. For Buddhism has never persecuted, simply because it has never been political at all, because it has always despised material happiness and material civilisation. That is to say, Buddhism has never had an Inquisition for exactly the same reason that it has never had a printing-press, or a Reform Bill, or a *Clarion* newspaper.

But if Mr. Blatchford really thinks that the gory past of an institution damns it, and if he really wants an institution to damn, an institution which is much older, and much larger, and much gorier than Christianity, I can easily oblige him.

The institution called Government or the State, has a past more shameful than a pirate ship. Every legal code on earth has been full of ferocity and heartrending error. The rack and the stake were not invented by Christians; Christians only picked up the horrible cast toys of Paganism. The rack and the stake were invented by a bitter Rationalism older than all religions. The rack and stake were invented by the State, by Society, by the Social Ideal—or, to put it shortly, by Socialism. And this State or Government, the mother of all whips and thumb-screws, this is, if you please, the very thing which Mr. Blatchford and his socialistic following would make stronger than it has ever been under the sun. Strange and admirable

delicacy. Delicacy which can have no further dealings with Christianity, because of the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew, but must rather invoke to purify the world a thing which has shown its soul in the torturing of Roman slaves for evidence, and in the artistic punishments of China.

I do not disagree with Mr. Blatchford for invoking the State. But then I do not think that the goriness of a thing's past disqualifies it from saving mankind. I, therefore, am consistent in thinking that Christianity is not disqualified. But Mr. Blatchford is not consistent, for he positively appeals to the greater sinner to save him from the lesser.

If only Mr. Blatchford would ask the real question. It is not, "Why is Christianity so bad when it claims to be so good?" The real question is, "Why are all human things so bad when they claim to be so good?" Why is not the most noble scheme a guarantee against corruption? If Nunquam will boldly pursue this question, will really leave delusions behind and walk across the godless waste, alone, he will come at last to a strange place. His sceptical pilgrimage will end at a place where Christianity begins.

Christianity begins with the wickedness of the Inquisition. Only it adds the wickedness of English Liberals, Tories, Socialists, and county magistrates. It begins with a strange thing running across human history. This it calls Sin, or the Fall of Man.

If ever I wish to expound it further, Mr. Blatchford's list of Christian crimes will be a most valuable compilation. In brief, however, Mr. Blatchford sees the sins of historic Christianity rise before him like a great tower. It is a star-defying Tower of Babel, lifting itself alone into the sky, affronting God in Heaven. Let him climb up it for a few years. When he is near to its tremendous top, he will find that it is one of the nine hundred and ninety-nine columns which support the

pedestal of the ancient Christian philosophy.

Right or wrong, Christianity has her theory and her remedy for the world's evils. But what is Mr. Blatchford's remedy? Before him also lies the wilderness of human frenzy and frivolity. What is his remedy? I am not uttering (as anyone ignorant of the facts might fancy) a wild joke; I am stating the sober truth of the situation, when I say that Mr. Blatchford's remedy for all this is that nobody should be responsible for anything.

Never perhaps in the history of mankind has a serious malady been met by a more astounding cure. For Mr. Blatchford, remember, propounds it as a cure. Many have admitted Fatalism as a melancholy metaphysical truth. No one before him, as far as I know, ever took it round with a big drum as a cheery means of moral improvement. The problem is that men will not live up to ideals. The problem is that while Marcus Aurelius is breaking his heart for righteousness, his own son Commodus cares only for bloodthirsty pantomimes. The remedy is to tell Commodus that he cannot help it. The problem is that the purity of St. Francis cannot prevent the corruption of Brother Elias. The remedy is to tell Brother Elias that he is not to be blamed and Francis not to be admired. The problem is that a man will often choose a base pleasure rather than a hard generosity. The remedy is to tell him that the base pleasure has been chosen for him.

I know quite well, of course, that Mr. Blatchford tried to make this monstrous anarchy more tolerable to the intellect. He did it by saying that although people ought not to be blamed for their actions, yet they ought to be trained to do better. They ought, he said, to be given better conditions of heredity and environment, and then they would be good, and the problem would be solved. The primary answer is obvious. How can one say that

a man ought not to be held responsible, but ought to be well trained? For if he "ought" to be well trained, there must be somebody who "ought" to train him. And that man must be held responsible for training him. The proposition has killed itself in three sentences. Mr. Blatchford has not removed the necessity for responsibility merely by saying that humanity, instead of being dealt with by the hangmen, ought to be dealt with by the doctors. For, upon the whole, and supposing that I required the services of either, I think I would sooner be dealt with by an irresponsible hangman than by an irresponsible doctor.

The second thing to say, of course, is that Mr. Blatchford offers nothing even remotely resembling an argument to show that he knows what conditions would produce good men, or that anybody knows. He cannot surely mean that mere conditions of physical comfort and mental culture produce good men; because manifestly they do not. Mr. Blatchford may have some secret receipt for virtue, making people live in trees, or shave their heads, or dine on some particular kind of lozenge, but he has not told anybody what it is.

The fact is very simple. It may be true that perfect conditions would produce perfect men. But it is much more obviously true that only perfect men could invent perfect conditions. If we make such a mess of our own lives, how can we be certain that we know the best soil for living things? If heredity and environment make it so necessary for us to commit theft and adultery, why should they not make it necessary for us to create conditions that will lead to theft and adultery? In the British Isles at this moment there exist, I imagine, people in every conceivable degree of riches and poverty from insane opulence to insane hunger. Is any one of those classes morally exquisite or glaringly any better than the rest? And where so many modes of education fail, by what

right does Mr. Blatchford assume his, whatever it is, to be infallible?

As for the great part of the talk of Mr. Blatchford about sin arising from vile and filthy environments, I do not wish to introduce into this discussion anything of personal emotion, but I am bound to say that I have great difficulty in enduring that talk with patience. Who in the world is it who thus speaks as if wickedness and folly raged only among the unfortunate? Is it Mr. Blatchford who falls back upon the old contemptible impertinence which represents virtue to be something upper-class, like a visiting card, or a silk hat? Is it Nunquam who denies the eternal heroism of the slums? The thing is almost incredible, but so it is. Nunquam has put as a coping stone upon his Temple, this association of vice with poverty, the vilest and the oldest and the dirtiest of all the stones that insolence has ever flung at the poor.

Man that is born of a woman has short days and full of trouble; but he is a nobler and a happier being than this would make him out. I will not deign to answer even Mr. Blatchford when he asks "how" a man born in filth and sin can live a noble life. I know so many who are doing it, within a stone's throw of my own house, in Battersea, that I care little how it is done. Man has something in him always which is not conquered by conditions. Yes, there is a liberty that has never been chained. There is a liberty that has made men happy in dungeons, as it may make them happy in slums. It is the liberty of the mind, that is to say, it is the one liberty on which Mr. Blatchford makes war. That which all the tyrants have left, he would extinguish. That which no gaoler could ever deny to a prisoner, Nunquam would deny. More numerous than can be counted, in all the wars and persecutions of the world, men have looked out of their little grated windows and said "at least my thoughts are free." "No, No," says the face of Mr.

Blatchford, suddenly appearing at the window "your thoughts are the inevitable result of heredity and environment. Your thoughts are as material as your dungeons. Your thoughts are as mechanical as the guillotine." So pants this strange comforter, from cell to cell.

I suppose Mr. Blatchford would say that in his Utopia nobody would be in prison. What do I care whether I am in prison or no, if I have to drag chains everywhere. A man in his Utopia may have, for all I know, free food, free meadows, his own estate, his own palace. What does it matter? he may not have his own soul. Every thought that comes into his head he must regard as the click of a machine. He sees a lost child and with a spasm of pity decides to adopt it. Click! he has to remember that he has not really done it at all. He has a temptation to do some huge irresistible sin; he reminds himself that he is a man, that he can, if he likes, be a hero; he resists it. Click! he remembers that he is not a man and not a hero, but a machine, so made as to produce that result. He walks in wide fields under a splendid sunrise; he resolves on some vast magnanimity—Click! what is the good of sunrises and palaces? Was ever slavery like unto this slavery? Was ever man before so much a slave?

I know that this will never be. That is, I know that Mr. Blatchford's philosophy will never be endured among sane men. But if ever it is I will very easily predict what will happen. Man, the machine, will stand up in these flowery meadows and cry aloud, "Was there not once a thing, a church, that taught us we were free in our souls? Did it not surround itself with tortures and dungeons in order to force men to believe that their souls were free? If there was, let it return, tortures, dungeons and all. Put me in those dungeons, rack me with those tortures, if by that means I may possibly believe it again."

III.—MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN ACTS

REV. CHARLES L. MARSON

CAN man sin against God? So many able men have disabled themselves on this thorny question that most people are very shy of handling it. However, we cannot choose but fight in this difficult ground, because our opponents have chosen it.

First, let us notice the weakness of the fatalist position in any Socialist persons. "The actions of man's will are as mathematically fixed at his birth as the motions of a planet in its orbit," says Mr. Blatchford in *God and My Neighbour* (p. 136). Does that apply to some men or to all men? To all men, if to any. Then, if we agree with Mr. Blatchford when he says, "I do seriously mean that no man can, under any circumstances, be justly blamed for anything he may say or do, we must not blame men acting together in laws or in societies or in armies or in Inquisitions.

If Bill Sikes is not to be blamed for beating his wife, neither can we blame the dead blackguards who have caused his "heredity," nor the living and dead people who are and make his "environment." If Lord Rackrent is not to be blamed for his cruel evictions, what is the use of telling us that "We can only blame his environment. There must be something wrong with a social system which permits one idle peer to ruin hundreds of industrious producers."

Here we are allowed and encouraged to blame environments and social systems, as if these were things quite apart from men and women—nothing at all to do with them, in fact. But if the actions of a man's will are so mathematically fixed, so are the actions of environments and social systems—unless Mr. Blatchford means

to tell us that a social system has a will which is not mathematically fixed at its birth or any other time; a social system can choose; a social system can be naughty; a social system can be praised logically, blamed logically, and be held responsible logically.

So we have got, with much flourish of trumpets, to this sane, sound, wise, logical, healthy, and true conclusion. That you may blame abstractions, but not individuals; peoples and neighbourhoods, but not persons. Yet the same process of reasoning which makes it ridiculous to blame any person for anything makes it equally or still more ridiculous for any person to blame anything, such as sweating, ignorance, vice, indeterminism, Christianity, heredity, cowardice, environment, and so on.

Now, as reform starts by a feeling and conviction of blame, and cannot start at all unless it can say: "This is wrong. It might be right. This ought not to be and is, and need not be"; so, if the answer is: "But this was as mathematically fixed at its birth as the path of a planet in its orbit," the poor reformer can only say, "Sorry I spoke"; and if he speaks again it will be to laugh at the *Clarion* for wasting ink in blaming orbits which are mathematically fixed.

Indeed, if I were a burglar, I would invest part of my swag in endowing Determinists to pour arguments and ridicule upon Christian magistrates and criminal codes, with their active and irritating blame. Certainly, if I were Lord Rackrent, I should invite my anti-reform friends, the Determinists, to dinner, take them to the opera, and send them round to address the Socialists, at my expense.

Mr. Blatchford, being anxious to fight against the doctrine of sin, builds a fatalist rampart, looks over the top, and says: "Can man sin against God? His actions are fixed." We walk round behind him, and say: "Can man sin against man? Can social systems sin against man?" And the very rampart of fatalism he has erected hinders him from escaping from a withering fire, except by backing into obscurantism and ultra-Toryism.

Indeed, Fatalists of all sorts, whether dubbed Determinists or not, remind me of two small boys who were examining a bicycle and explaining it to one another. One fixed on the chain-links, and said: "That pulls that, and it pulls that, and that pulls that, and so it goes round." The other looked at it for a little time, followed the links round and round a few times, and then said: "But it is not going round now!" He meant to say that if each-link-tugging-each-link were the whole explanation, the wheel would not stop or start, or get fast or slow, but would clank on as long as the links lasted.

Two people look at the world, and one explains to us that there is a big chain in it, called Cause and Effect. The big chain, he says, pulls the wheels round, and each link pulls each link all round in a two-pivot circle, and there you are. There is no delusion. What more can you want?

But the Indeterminist boy is not satisfied. He says: "But it isn't going round now?" He wants a great deal more. He wants to know where the legs come in, and why there are hubs, cranks, sprockets, pedals, and things not accounted for in the neat little theory of the first boy. If the bicycle were a free wheel one, I can imagine he would jolly well confute the other boy, and prove to him that chains have nothing at all to do with the matter, and are strictly ornamental or imaginary.

It seems to me that Fatalists and Free Willers are both very foolish

theorists, because they both know better. After wrangling in the study over Fate and Free Will, the Fatalist says: "Brown owes me five shillings. I must go and see if I can get it out of the rascal"; and the Free Willer says: "And I must go and look after my boy. *I know for certain* the young rascal will be breaking windows with his catapult."

The Fatalist is not quite so sure about Brown's mind being in practice mathematically fixed; and the Free Willer has little doubt that Tommy will be moved to do evil.

My own contention is that each is right in the active theory preached by his life, and each wrong in the account he gives of what he does (*not*) do. Each one is sure of the thing to be done, but muddled about the argument by which to explain it.

It has been well said that the Fatalist doctrine describes a will which has no form, and so *wills* nothing. The Free Willer has a will with no content, and so wills *nothing*. So when we laugh at Mr. Blatchford's mishaps, let us not fall into the ditch on the other side.

The doctrine of Free Will is a theory invented to save us from the unthinkable position of Fatalism. We must be quite clear that when we say a man can sin, and is responsible, and ought to do good, and if he does not ought to be punished, that we do *not* say: "A man is responsible because there is no reason why he should have done one thing rather than another thing"; that "You are accountable, in short, because you are a wholly unaccountable creature."

That seems foolish. What is the objection, then, to Determinism, if it is not the denial of a chance element in choice?

Suppose a lot of guests at dinner, and the waiter asking, "Thick or clear soup, sir?" You would have a choice, and you would choose *because* this or that suited you; because six weeks ago

the doctor advised you to take Julienne. If, against his orders, and knowing you would get a gouty toe, you chose turtle, you would confess you had been a fool, and not object to owning responsibility, even if he had said: "I know you will go and take turtle at the annual dinner." But suppose I came and told you that I had electrified the bell-rope behind you, and that had forced you to choose turtle and gout; you would, if you believed me, be very angry or alarmed, and take care to avoid my electricity for the future, or grovel to get me to let you have a will of your own, even in soups.

What would alarm us would be just this—that we should be, as it were, broken up and pieced together again like a poor dead thing, and nothing of character would remain to us if our will can be electrified, without force, into this or that action. So far from such a notion making us act wisely, it would do the exact opposite—it would make us act in constant terror of witchcraft, like negroes.

We ordinary folk think that, somehow or other, a man is responsible because he takes evil or good into himself, and makes himself an embodiment of that evil or that good. When Bill Sikes beats his wife, we say: "Bill, we think you are bad. You must be punished. Your friend, the Determinist, says that landlords, capitalists, and others have helped, aided, and abetted you. If your counsel will produce these rogues, they shall be punished, too; but in the meantime, for you 40s. or a month."

We do not deny that "heredity" or "environment" helps Bill to be bad, but once he is bad we hit at "heredity" and "environment" in Bill's person, and out of it, too, if we know how. If you have a plan to prevent people being bad, out with it by all means. Socialism is not new in this. If you read any of the Fathers on baptism, you will see that they look upon it as transplanting the person into

a new environment—the Christian Church. The Church is very strong upon the benefits of re-potting.

If Mr. Blatchford is right in making the words "praise," "blame," "responsibility," and so on all moonshine and fools' talk, he cannot stop there; he must make the words "I," "thou," and "he" equally much moonshine. I am no more responsible for the murder I did yesterday than that the River Thames at London is for drowning a man at Oxford, because I am not the same man (not the same rag-bag of forces), not in the same place, and in quite another state, both of mind, body, temperature, pressure, and moisture. The moonshine is, if anywhere, in premises which lead to such ridiculous conclusions.

If man cannot sin against God, because he is tied up in chains called "cause and effect"; he cannot, for the same reason, sin against man, or benefit man, or do good; indeed, he is not any person at all, but only a tangled knot in the skein of forces, and cannot even earn praise or do good or harm to himself. In other words, if "I will" or "I choose" are nonsense phrases, because there is no will and no choice, the nonsense must extend to the "I," as well as to the "will." There is not an "I," or a Blatchford, or a policeman, or anybody, and that seems a lame and lunatic conclusion.

But suppose that, just for argument's sake, we thought that time was not a thing in itself, but only the coloured glass through which we peep—that Time is in the eye, let us say, and not in the object looked at. What, then, happens to causality? Effect is a thing that always comes after cause, after in time. But Time we agreed to consider for the moment to be in the perceiving mind, so cause and effect become just our way of knowing things. We know them under the form of cause and effect. We are, then, so far as knowing goes, bound to know them and ourselves under this

limitation ; but in so far as we *are*, we are not ourselves in these chains ; whatever our sciences may be, our being is not so limited. Knowledge of a limit as limit already transcends that limit.

Now one word as to punishments. There is only one reason for punishing people, and that is that they deserve it. As to whether it will do them good or harm, that is impossible to say, and hardly for us even to inquire.

Two boys play truant from school for the same reason—bird's-nesting—on the same day. Both are whipped with the same cane, by the same arm, with equal force to an ounce. One sulks ; one learns to think more seriously of the claims of learning. The former is the worse, the latter the better for ever for the event, but no one can possibly prophesy or calculate upon this ; but we can tell this : What do they deserve ? And when all the sophistry, sentiment, and flapdoodle have done their worst, and talked themselves hoarse and written themselves dry, our sons will assuredly come back to believe in asking not what *pays* spiritually or materially, but what is just, in punishment as well as in everything else. At least, I hope and believe they will ; and they will try to pay what they owe in cash and skin—and exact the same in fair cess from all they have to do with ; for that is the glory of the English.

If folk perish under strict justice, in strict justice they ought to perish, and every other theory can be sent back to the Devil marked, "Not wanted on the voyage." We do not know for certain what will "do folk good," and we have no means of finding that out

exactly ; but we do know, or we can find out, what they deserve, and we can try to mete that out.

If Mr. Blatchford appears as counsel for Bill Sikes, and says he deserves less because he has been taught ill, and dragged up on a dung-hill, we may (and I hope shall) try to teach Bill something while we are punishing him, and try to start him with a chance when his punishment is over ; but, on the whole, to be just is Bill's best chance, and ours, too. However much we are convinced (and we ought to be convinced) that better social conditions would lessen future crime, yet that question has nothing to do with just punishment for crime already committed.

I have tried to show you that we are, as you well know, not automata, but men, who are liable to give an account to ourselves, to one another, and to God, for our misdoings. But I have not answered some questions such as these : "Why did not God make men unable to sin ?" because I cannot answer them, except by saying that men unable to sin are already to be found—in zoological gardens, in collections of statuary, in Madame Tussaud's Exhibition, and in pyramids, sarcophagi, and cemeteries. I don't know why God made me able to do more harm, and to deserve worse, than any of my likes among the Simiidae, the statues, the wax-works, and the coffins ; but I am somewhat glad He chose otherwise. But I will try to consider, humbly, whether I ought to envy those others, whose states Mr. Blatchford seems to wish me to hanker after, whose existence is more according to Determinist ideals.

IV.—THE WAY OUT FOR ALL

GEORGE HAW

"ALL men, if they work not as in a Great Taskmaster's eye," says Carlyle, "will work wrong, work unhappily for themselves and you." But Mr. Blatchford traces error and wrong-doing to other sources. He maintains:

1. That man is a creature of heredity and environment.

2. That his ancestors make his nature.

3. That other men and circumstances modify his nature.

That, I agree, is a reasonable position for one to take up who disowns Christ. Outside Christ, it might be said to be a general rule, though it is not an invariable one; for some men are strong enough to undo their nature, and make of themselves whatever they will, and in all of us habit can almost change the stamp of nature.

As a doctrine of man, however, it holds good; but what a poor, uninspiring doctrine it is! Man simply the product of heredity and environment! The only hope for his redemption a change of environment!

We believe in something higher, and far more hopeful. We believe that, whatever may be one's heredity and environment, one can completely transform one's life by accepting Christ. We believe that all men are joint heirs of the Heavenly Father; that, whatever may be their inheritance from their ancestors, they also have an inheritance from God. That inheritance awaits everyone who seeks it by turning to God.

All who put their trust in God feel that with this new birth—"ye must be born again"—has come a new inheritance, also. They can then say with the Psalmist:

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. . . .

Yea, I have a goodly heritage. . . .

Thou will show me the path of life:

In Thy presence is fulness of joy.

How much better this than the doctrine that man can only be made better by a change in his environment? We need to change the environment of many of our neighbours, it is true; we need the change, in the name of all that is merciful and just; but do not let us expect too much from the change. An act of justice to our neighbours is not going to change our neighbours' hearts, nor make our neighbours gentle and just and temperate, if they were not gentle and just and temperate before. An act of justice in a court of law does not produce any such change.

Give us, by all means, all the justice that is ours, but do not accompany your acts of justice with milk-and-water blandishments that we are going to be reformed creatures because we have at last got what is ours by right. Are we to be likened to children who, running in from play for a piece of bread and jam, only receive it on condition that they promise to be good. Of course, the youngsters promise to be good, but no mother believes for a moment that the bread and jam will make her children good in the sense that all their bad instincts will disappear.

The Christian religion does not redeem us by offers of bread and jam. Its redemption comes by an act of will on man's own part in deliberately accepting Christ as his Guide. That simple act transforms one as nothing else on earth can.

Christians can keep to their way under whatever system of government man may devise. No theory of life, no system of government, that ignores

God will work for the good of mankind or abide for long. Socialism, if established without Christ would but repeat many of the evils that afflict mankind to-day under Individualism.

Injustice is not wholly due to systems of government. If it were, injustice would disappear when the system was changed. Have we not changed the system and thereby altered the environment scores of times? Mankind has tried empires, monarchies, republics, commonwealths, self-governing colonies, free land settlements, communal societies, Socialist experiments, as well as voluntary colonies that tried to get along without money; but injustice and wrongdoing have sprung up in them all.

Not a change in systems or surroundings so much as a change in men is wanted. You may put a duke in an engineer's shop, but that would not make the duke an engineer. One reason why is because, as I once heard Mr. John Burns tell the London County Council, some dukes don't know the technical difference between a paint brush and a shovel. You may put Christopher Sly to sleep in the Duke of Plaza Toro's bed, but that will not make Christopher Sly a duke when he wakes up. Many house-breakers in the suburbs dress like deacons, with frock coats and silk hats; but while the deacons are at church on Sunday evenings, the others are rifling their houses.

Neither our garb nor our government changes us really. Science certainly does not. We do not become better men by new discoveries in science. Were we to become so, goodness would be a matter of education only. We know very well it is nothing of the kind. We who believe that Christianity is the way of the greatest good because it is the way of perfect truth, say that education has nothing to do with the right living that comes of faith in Christ. Often enough, Christianity transforms into saints the poor and the ignorant, while the rich and the learned remain in evil.

How valiantly, though all in vain, have men sought perfect truth in other roads. How easily, too, we accept as truth what is popular and plausible: "Men are apt to prefer a prosperous error to an afflicted truth," wrote Jeremy Taylor nearly 300 years ago; and the same holds good to this day.

Because error is prosperous and truth afflicted in these times of ours, the Christian religion is so lightly regarded. In proportion as we are permitting error to prosper and truth to be afflicted, injustice and other wrong-doing are growing in our midst. Nowhere does that stand out more than in our public life. Principles of honour and liberty are lightly cast aside to suit political ends or private gain. The perfect truth of Christianity, however, still remains the perfect truth, afflict it as we may.

Men are no more really reformed by a change of environment than they are by an Act of Parliament. But I have known a Bill Sikes and an Artful Dodger and a Becky Sharp become gentle and honest and meek and merciful under the influence of this much-abused Christian religion. It was not their environment that changed them; but once they believed in Christ they very soon changed their environment.

The change needed is a change of heart rather than of environment. It is a change from within, rather than a change from without. It is a change from the error of man's way to the perfect truth of God's way.

We all have the power to will which of the two ways to take. Mr. Blatchford, disbelieving in the Christian doctrine of free will, denies that man has this power. In the chapter, "Can Man Sin Against God?" Mr. Blatchford says:

A man always "wills," in favour of the weightier motive. If he loves the sense of intoxication more than he loves his self-respect, he will drink. If the reason in favour of sobriety seems to him to outweigh

the reason in favour of drink, he will keep sober.

What of desire? What of an overpowering craving? No drunkard ever loved the sense of intoxication more than his self-respect. His self-respect makes him struggle against the craving for drink; often enough, it makes him abhor drunkenness and loathe himself; and when he yields again, it is not because he wills to yield, but because his will has been so weakened by indulgence that it has lost the power to keep him in that state of self-respect which he would like to preserve.

If the poor habitual drunkard is to be cited at all, he might be used as an example of the error that lies in man's way of reform. Change the drunkard's environment as often as you like (has it not been tried often?), you seldom get rid of the craving for drink. I have not heard of any confirmed drunkard, man or woman, who has been completely reformed except by electing to go the way of Christ. Not only have I heard, but I have known, of men and women, former slaves to drink, in whom Christ has worked as by a miracle. The change came from within, not from without. It came by an act of will in trusting, not in man, but in God.

Our wills are perfectly free to receive or reject God. If man, who was made perfect, had not had a free will, he could not have sinned against God, and thus fallen from his perfect state. Without free will, his perfection would have been subjection. He would have been the slave of God, not the child of God. It is better to be free, even though our freedom sometimes leads us into error, than to be enslaved to others. That is why I believe in Democracy. Democracy is not immaculate; it has committed many crimes and errors; but it is better that a people should be free to govern themselves, even though they make mistakes, than that they should be dependent on the will of others.

This rejection of God by our own free wills is sinning against God. Sin is the source of all evil. Sin then is at the bottom of all the injustice in the world.

What is sin? Sin is selfishness. Sin is the preferring of our own way—that is, man's way—to the way of God.

And then, in our failure to understand the pain and evil of life, we turn round and blame God, Whom we have rejected. After refusing the free offer He makes to all of us of a safe and sure Guide in the Person of His Son, Who would keep us in the way of truth, we blame Him for the errors we find in the ways of men, for the thorns and thistles so thickly strewn about the paths which man has made.

It is a cry of defeat and despair. We go out to seek truth apart from God, and become as one seeking water in a desert, or land in the far-off, fathomless seas. And then we blame God for the waste and the barrenness, the God whom we have rejected, Who bade us trust in Him, not in man.

"Why does God not give the world peace, and health, and happiness, and virtue?" asks Mr. Blatchford, in arguing against the Christian doctrine that God is love.

And the answer is: God does give the world peace, and health, and happiness, and virtue; but man has turned peace into war, health into disease, happiness into misery, and virtue into vice. In doing so, man has sinned against God, and wrought great injustice to his neighbours. Man has the power to choose peace and virtue, as offered by God; but he refuses and persists in sin. Do not let us blame God for the sins of man.

"If God blesses, who curses?"

Mr. Blatchford goes on to ask. "If God saves, who damns? If God helps, who harms?"

The answer to each of these questions is—man.

Man curses, man damns, man harms; and in spite of all man's inhumanity to man, in spite of all his offences to God, his Maker, God loves and forgives

this wayward creature man, and holds out to him His offer of pardon and peace and joy. And when man goes on refusing this good, and continuing his sinful work of cursing and damning and harming, in spite of it all, God, the Almighty Maker of Heaven and earth, continues for ever to offer him pardon and peace. And still man goes on cursing and damning and harming.

If any of us had sinned against our earthly father as often as we have sinned against our Heavenly Father, we should not expect forgiveness for one moment. The worst among us would be deeply conscious that we did not deserve forgiveness.

Nor do we deserve forgiveness from God. We are not forgiven because we have deserved forgiveness. If we all had our deserts, even here among men, which of us would escape a whipping? How much more does this apply to our relations with God? There is none righteous; no, not one.

That is why we all need Christ. "I am not come," He says, by way of checking the presumption of contented church-goers, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Considered simply as an affair between man and man, we should be inclined to say how noble, how generous of anyone to come specially to warn and advise those who have been despising and reviling him. How should we exalt the memory of any man from among ourselves who not only did this, but also gave his life to save the people who had despised and reviled him? Yet we regard very lightly the fact that "God commended His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

We, have, therefore, no claim upon Christ because of any worthiness in ourselves. Our only claim is our unworthiness.

We are never admitted to any society or friendship on earth if we are known to be unworthy. Yet our unworthiness becomes our very passport to the fellowship of God. We have not to wait

until we can first rub ourselves clean of the miry clay of our sins. By ourselves, none of us could get all the clay off. We are invited in our uncleanness and in our weakness. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

You don't find a religion like that anywhere else in the world. However much a man may despair of himself, he need never despair of the love of God. That love is over him, even in his uncleanness and ungodliness. More, it is over him while he is yet an enemy. You know the words of St. Paul:

For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.

In pleading for a gospel of humanity apart from Christ, Mr. Blatchford says that he, too, forgives all his enemies and all evil men. He says he is sorry for them, and pities them. "I do not hate the man who calls me an infidel, a liar, a blasphemer, or a quack," he says. But would Mr. Blatchford's Humanism help him to love a man who for years had been to him

Unclean,
Unfaithful,
An enemy?

And, supposing that he still had love for the man, would he be prepared to give his life to save his enemy?

"Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend." Other men besides Christ have done that. But when it comes to one's enemies, it is different. As St. Paul puts it:

Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Humanism does not go so far as that. It can understand the laying down of a life for friends, and in some cases even for strangers; but not for those who are known to be enemies.

Here Humanism is baffled. Being but a religion of erring man, conceived by erring man for the salvation of erring man, it knows that the laying down of a life in order to save an enemy is not the way of man, no matter how unselfish or forgiving he may be. For anyone to atone for the guilt of others by giving his life is not human: it is divine. As the Humanist owns only to what is of man, he is driven to deny what is of God.

That is what Mr. Blatchford does when he is confronted by this great fact of the Christian religion. "There was no Atonement," says Mr. Blatchford. Then he proceeds, on his next page, to argue against it. "Is it just, is it moral, to make the good suffer for the bad?" he asks. "Is it just or moral to forgive one man his sin because another is sinless?"

We reply readily that it is not just nor moral according to man's light. It is something that passes out of the ken of man: it is divine.

Had the Cross been only something that was just to man, it would have been but little more than a common human occurrence.

Were God just to man only in the sense that man is just to man, He would punish him for his offences. But God is merciful, God is love, and out of His boundless love and mercy He sent Christ to atone for all the wrong we have done, not only to Him, but to our neighbours and to ourselves.

Do you think we could trust in God were His justice only after the pattern of the fickle and erring justice of man? The justice of God surpasses anything that man can comprehend. The mercy of God endureth for ever. The love of God is broader than the measure of men's minds.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.

Men no more understand the ways

of God than animals understand the ways of men. A dog does not understand the ways of its master, but it trusts him, and follows him, and serves him. How few are the men, even among professing Christians, who trust and follow and serve their Master with the same fidelity?

According to the ways of men, then, the Atonement may be, as Mr. Blatchford says, "contrary to reason and justice." But reason and justice are imperfect and unsatisfying and varying things. The love and the mercy of God are perfect, and therefore, infinitely higher than either reason or justice. Mercy is greater than justice; love is greater than reason. If the Atonement is not just, let us be thankful that the love of God is such that we are not treated according to our deserts, but with infinite mercy. If it is not just, it is wondrously merciful.

"If one man injures another," says Mr. Blatchford in further argument against the Atonement, "the prerogative of pardon should belong to the injured man. It is for him who suffers to forgive."

That is exactly what Christ did. He spoke few words from the Cross, but the very first—uttered in the agony of carrying out the Atonement—were these: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

I put it to your common sense—leaving out all questions of religious belief or anything else—did ever man live and serve and die as this Man? He came to seek and to save the fallen, the unclean, the ungodly, and even His enemies, those who had despised and reviled Him; and when they were putting Him to death by torture, even that did not lessen His love, for in the very throes of death there came from out His agonised heart a prayer for the forgiveness of His murderers, and a glorious promise for the thief by His side.

ANTI-HAECKEL

AN EXPOSURE OF HAECKEL'S
VIEWS OF CHRISTIANITY

BY
FRIEDRICH LOOFS
PROFESSOR OF CHURCH HISTORY, HALLE

TRANSLATED BY THE
REV. H. R. MACKINTOSH, D.PHIL. (EDIN.)
ABERDEEN

SECOND EDITION

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

PROFESSOR FRIEDRICH LOOFS, of Halle, has for some time been known on the Continent and in Britain as a scholar of singular learning, ability and candour. Among English writers Dr. Sanday, of Oxford, has taken an especial pleasure in extolling the spirit and value of his work. "Loofs," he says in a recent article, "that most scientific of German theologians." But Professor Loofs is more than a brilliant and indefatigable author in his own department of theology. He is a preacher of striking power and enthusiasm; he is a man, too, whose interest in matters of evangelical religion has always been of the most practical and living type. And to both science and religion he has never done better service than by writing this just and trenchant examination of Professor Haeckel's views of Christianity. Intensely disagreeable as the work could not fail to be, it has been done once for all.

It would appear that the question of the Virgin-Birth of Christ—which, for my part, I receive as the credible and befitting preface to a Life that was crowned by the Resurrection from the dead—is about to form the subject of wide and protracted discussion. Let us hope that none will follow

Professor Haeckel's example in employing in the debate the weapons of vile and unscrupulous insinuation.

It is the part of a translator to render his author in clear and accurate language, without note or comment of any kind ; and it is on this principle, as the reader will understand, that I have acted. I ought to say that in the quotations from the *Riddle of the Universe*, I have, for convenience sake, followed the cheap English edition issued by the Rationalist Press Association, though at one or two points I have deviated into paths of my own.

The translation has had the benefit of revision at the hands of Professor Loofs himself, to whom I am indebted for counsel and suggestion of the most valuable kind. My thanks are also due to the Rev. A. R. Gordon, M.A., Monikie, Forfarshire, who read the whole in manuscript and in proof.

H. R. MACKINTOSH.

ABERDEEN, *November*, 1903.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

MY *Anti-Haeckel*, now presented in an English translation, does not profess to be a refutation of Haeckel's view of the world ; it is merely an exposure of the audacious statements he has made regarding Christianity and its history in the seventeenth chapter of his *Riddle of the Universe*. Moreover, the *brochure* was obviously written for German, not for English, readers, and in some respects is out of date. English readers are not likely to meet with the German translation of Saladin's *God and His Book*. And my pamphlet is thus far out of date. that the *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Kritik und Anti-Kritik* has long ceased to exist, that the "Explanation" published in reply to me by Haeckel in that extinct review, to which reference is made in the following pages, was doubtless for himself a thing of merely ephemeral importance, and that in the popular edition of his *Riddle, etc.*, he has altered or omitted a few of the passages which I had attacked.

Nevertheless, I felt it my duty to comply with the request that I should sanction an English translation of the little book, published now three and a half years ago. I have done so because I

believe that the book will reveal, even to English readers—and perhaps still more effectively now than on its first appearance—the devotion to truth which animated Haeckel in his attempt to solve the riddle of the universe.

As I have said, the English public is certainly not likely to read the German translation of Saladin's book. But all the more significance will they attach to the fact that Haeckel, who knew only the German translation, made by an utterly uneducated German free-thinker, should have compromised himself by using, as the "main source" of his theological erudition, an English book supplied to him from the lowest strata of German literature. And even though Haeckel's "Explanation" in the extinct *Zeitschrift* may have had for himself a merely passing importance, yet its tone and language, as well as the thoughtless precipitancy with which he accepted the extremely precarious championship of the review itself, throw a sinister light upon his scientific carefulness and veracity.

So that my pamphlet is not out of date after all. Indeed, it may prove more effective to-day than three years ago. A young champion of Haeckel who has subjected it to a criticism as arrogant as it is baseless (see *Die Zukunft* for August 1 of this year, and cf. my reply in the same magazine for August 22), sought at the outset of his article to justify his dilettante performance by pleading that people's minds were still possessed by the delusion, growing stronger every day, that I had successfully administered correction and chastisement to Haeckel for his theological errors (p. 197). Well, as a matter

of fact, I know of no academic teacher who has publicly taken Haeckel's part against my strictures. The two great scientific reviews of Germany, the *Litterarische Centralblatt* (1900, col. 1517), and the *Deutsche Litteraturzeitung* (1900, col. 3167 f.), in the notices which they gave of my book, expressed essential agreement with my conclusions; Professor Friedrich Paulsen, the well known professor of philosophy in Berlin, in a withering essay entitled "Ernst Haeckel als Philosoph" (*Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1900, p. 29 ff.), adopted my verdict on Haeckel's seventeenth chapter (p. 60); such is also the judgment of Erich Adickes (then professor of philosophy at Kiel, now at Münster) in his pamphlet *Kant contra Haeckel* (1901, p. 104); and even the Göttingen professor of philosophy, Julius Baumann, who, to a certain extent, takes Haeckel's part against his theological opponents, says: "Haeckel's chapter on 'Science and Christianity' has been censured by the *Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau* for the tone in which it discusses religious questions. Not merely, however, do we concur in this censure, but we cannot but agree with all that Loofs, professor of theology in Halle, has urged in his *Anti-Haeckel* (third edition) to prove how far astray Haeckel has been led by his 'authorities,' and how little he knows of modern theological science" (*Haeckel's Welträtsel nach ihren starken und schwachen Seiten*, Leipzig, 1900, p. 66 f.). I have, it is true, been assailed in the coarsest terms by Social Democrat journals, by followers of Haeckel (cf. Heinrich Schmidt, *Der Kampf um die "Welträtsel,"* Bonn, 1900), and by would-be critics who have yet their

spurs to win (such as Dr. Hermann Friedmann, author of the above-mentioned article in *Die Zukunft*, 1900, No. 44, and others), for having dared to assail the great Haeckel ; but the professional representatives of science, and even of natural science, so far as I know, have left Haeckel alone to defend himself against Dr. Paulsen and me. Now, had he really been concerned about scientific truth, this would have compelled him either to amend, or else to justify on scientific grounds, the passages in his book which had been attacked. But what has he done ? He has now sought from the masses the applause which has been denied him by the scientific world. In other words, he has published a popular edition of the *Riddle, etc.*, which is essentially unchanged, save for a few alterations and an appendix. But it is just these alterations and the new appendix which may make my *brochure* even more effective now than it was three years ago.

In the appendix Haeckel admits that the theological section is " far the weakest and most assailable " part of his book (*Volksausgabe*, p. 165), assures us that he is not an absolute foe of Christianity, at least not of its pure morality, and says of Saladin (p. 167) : " The fact that in my seventeenth chapter, which has been attacked with peculiar bitterness, I have repeatedly referred to this authority, has been viewed by my theological opponents as the worst offence of all. How far their censures are justified by the facts I am not able to decide, for theology in the strict sense is quite out of my line. I can only urge in reply, for one thing, that Saladin is unquestionably a theologian of very many-sided attainments

[but how can any one be a judge on such a point if theology is 'quite out of his line' ?]; and on the other hand that his plain-spoken criticism of the Bible, and especially his clear exhibition of the innumerable errors and contradictions to be found in this 'Word of God,' at once commends itself to sound and unsophisticated common sense. In many details, of course, Saladin has gone astray, just as other expositors of the Bible have done. And at many points I must express disapprobation of the odious tone of his virulent attacks upon *Jehovas gesammelte Werke* " [the "Collected Works of Jehovah," viz. the Bible]. *In spite of this Haeckel has left his seventeenth chapter practically unchanged!* Only the following alterations are to be noted. The Nicene Council is now dated rightly in the year 325 (p. 125); in the story of the "jumping books," the reference to the *Synodicon* of "Pappus" has dropped out (*ibid.*), and the story is now told merely on Saladin's authority; on p. 126 Haeckel now enumerates the Pauline Epistles as thirteen, no longer as fourteen, and rightly regards the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians and Corinthians as *four*, not *three*; in the sentence (p. 126), "According to recent historical investigation, Paul's father was of Greek nationality, and his mother of Jewish," the word "was" is changed into "is held to be"; the reference to the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua* on p. 131 has been struck out; the assertion that the Pandera story occurs in one of the apocryphal *Gospels* has been changed into the statement that the narrative is to be found "in one of these apocryphal *writings*"; a reference to Celsus has been added; and, finally, the abominable sentence,

“Other details given about Miriam (the Hebrew name for Mary) are far from being to the credit of the ‘Queen of Heaven’” (cf. *infra*, p. 56) has been altogether omitted. It is to be noted, however, that Haeckel has altered nothing more; the erroneous figures of his religious statistics, for which our pretentious author had no authority other than Saladin (cf. *infra*, p. 35), have been left quite unchanged; even the worst blunder into which Haeckel has fallen—the confusion of the Roman Catholic dogma of 1854 with the Biblical narrative of the Virgin-Birth (cf. *infra*, p. 39)—remains uncorrected, while the filthy comment of Saladin, which Haeckel had used to give to this, his masterpiece, the flavour of piquant vulgarity (cf. *infra*, p. 55), has not been suppressed, in spite of the censure which, in the above quotation, he has himself passed on Saladin’s tone. This shows that Haeckel prefers to produce on the masses the impression which suits his purpose, rather than to examine the truth seriously. The same thing is proved to the hilt by the nonchalance with which, in the story of “the jumping books,” the *Synodicon* of Pappus, and in the Pandera story the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua* are dropped out, and the apocryphal *Gospels* changed into apocryphal *writings*. Do assertions become any more scientifically tenable when their supports, the worthlessness of which has been demonstrated, are simply withdrawn? For every serious scientific mind the corrections which Haeckel has thus made, when placed side by side with my criticisms, are a serious blow to his reputation. To him Church and Christianity are

simply a *corpus vile*, in dealing with which he regards himself as at liberty to dispense with the most elementary principles of scientific inquiry, and to make the wildest assertions without furnishing any proof of their truth.

The passages in the appendix to the German popular edition, which refer to this pamphlet of mine, are further proof to the same effect. There Haeckel writes : " The case is quite otherwise (viz. than with Nippold, who had interwoven compliments with his objections to Haeckel's book) with an orthodox theologian, Friedrich Loofs, Professor of Church History in Halle. His *Anti-Haeckel* (Halle, 1900) is in the main a carefully chosen collection of the most multifarious insults and epithets of abuse ; of these Heinrich Schmidt, on two pages of his *brochure* (19-20) has given a specimen list. The honourable qualities of ' stupidity, uneducatedness, ignorance, folly, absurdity, etc., ' strengthened by the pleasing epithets, ' incredible, monstrous, dishonourable, disingenuous, offensive, repulsive, contemptible, too silly, etc., ' are so frequently attributed to me in this filthy pamphlet that it must be too much even for the most pious believer. Yet Loofs' miserable compilation (which has circulated widely in several editions) has its comical side too, and I cannot refrain from expressing my thanks for the hours of amusement which the pious fanatic of Halle has afforded me and my friends at Jena. For after the honourable Church Councillor [a title which, be it said in passing, I do not possess] has proved that the author of the *Riddle, etc.*, does not possess a healthy scientific conscience, and that he

cannot be credited, in any domain of scientific work, with earnestness or serious veracity" [here, and in what follows, Haeckel is quoting the words of my first edition, which were altered in the third and fourth], "he concludes his philippic with the following sentences, 'These are hard words. My whole argument is *insulting* to Professor Haeckel, and is meant to be so. I have written in such a way that any court of law would declare me guilty of having defamed my colleague of Jena, had I not at the same time brought proof positive of my assertions. I should hold myself refuted only by a judicial verdict, based upon previously submitted expert opinion.' This is really a delightful idea! The decision as to where the truth lies in the great struggle between conflicting views of the world is to be left to the legal acumen of a bench of German judges, in the last resort to the High Court of Justice! Our excellent lawyers are certainly for the most part men of justice, but the great majority would themselves disclaim all competence to decide fundamental questions of philosophy, the settlement of which demands above all a thorough *biological* training. But perhaps my colleague, Professor Loofs, expects that, in reply to his insulting abuse, I should send him my second, and challenge him to a *duel* 'with swords or pistols'? Then he will wait in vain! In my judgment the duel, if regarded as 'the ordeal of God,' is an irrational proceeding, while as a barbaric custom it belongs to the list of nuisances. I say nothing of the fact that this savage form of revenge is a direct blow at the mild principles of the Christian religion."

That language like this has an influence on a certain class of readers I gather from several scurrilous communications which have reached me since the publication of his popular edition. But they are not an answer. An answer *at the present stage of the controversy* would of necessity have offered some apology for the blunders and bad taste of the seventeenth chapter, as well as for the characterization of Saladin given in Haeckel's "Explanation," and would have set forth the reasons why the passages in that chapter, which remain unaltered in spite of my polemic, have not been changed. Haeckel may have thought that such an explanation would be beneath him, but the mockery which he gives instead of a real answer is still more so. For he knew quite well that my pamphlet had nothing to do with his "scientific view of the world," or "fundamental questions of philosophy." It was not the struggle between conflicting views of the world that I referred to the decision of the law courts, but purely and solely the question whether I had brought satisfactory evidence of the truth of the charges made in the following pages, charges which were aimed at Haeckel's ignorance of the history of Christianity, and in which his tone was described as despicably vulgar. If I have made good my charges, then no law court in the land would characterize the intentionally strong expressions I have used as punishable defamations, any more than it would punish me for calling the word *thief* after a man whom I can prove guilty of theft. This, which is the real state of the case, Haeckel has concealed from his readers; and no one who has not read the following pages

could possibly gather from what Haeckel says a true impression of what I have written. In spite of this he adds these words to the passage I have cited: "As regards the general attitude of a reasonable and honourable man to public insults, I hold that the practice of Frederick the Great was right in the main—he caused the pamphlets aimed at him to be hung lower down than before, so that people might read them more easily." For my part, this is the course I have followed in the foregoing pages with Haeckel's polemic against me; and I leave my book to defend itself against the description he has given of it. If Professor Haeckel is really desirous of imitating this royal example in dealing with Dr. Paulsen and me, let him allow my *Anti-Haeckel* and Dr. Paulsen's essay from the *Preussische Jahrbücher* to be printed at the end of his *Riddle, etc.*, so that people may read what we have actually said, and not merely the account of it that Haeckel has thought fit to give. Let him do so, and we shall gladly bear the cost!

F. LOOFS.

HALLE, *September* 14, 1903.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	I
II.	"SALADIN'S" BOOK	6
III.	HAECKEL'S EVASION OF THE POINT AT ISSUE .	19
IV.	THE "SCIENTIFIC" CHARACTER OF HAECKEL'S STATEMENTS IN CHAPTER XVII. OF THE <i>Riddle of the</i> <i>Universe</i>	23
V.	THE TONE OF HAECKEL'S XVIITH CHAPTER . .	54
VI.	CONCLUSION	57

APPENDICES

I.	THE AUTHOR'S OPEN LETTER TO PROFESSOR HAECKEL, PUBLISHED IN THE <i>Christliche Welt</i> OF NOVEMBER 9, 1899	60
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CHAP.	PAGE
II. PROFESSOR HAECKEL'S REJOINDER, PUBLISHED IN THE <i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Kritik</i> <i>und Anti-Kritik</i> OF JANUARY 6, 1900; TOGETHER WITH THE SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE BY THE EDITOR OF THE <i>Zeitschrift</i> , DR. ERICH BISCHOFF . . .	73
NOTES	85

I

INTRODUCTION

IN his book, *The Riddle of the Universe : Popular Studies in Monistic Philosophy* (Bonn, 1899), Professor Ernst Haeckel, of Jena, has devoted some chapters to a professed explanation of the bearings of his "monistic philosophy" on Christianity. Besides exhibiting a fierce hatred of Christianity, these chapters make it clear that Professor Haeckel does not in the remotest degree understand either Christian faith or Christian morality; not only so, they betray *the most incredible ignorance* of various matters connected with the historical development of Christianity with which every one can make himself familiar, even though he may possess no sense of the true character of Christian piety.

Any one may hate Christianity if he chooses ; and it is a very common, indeed a normal, phenomenon to find such hatred wedded to ignorance and defective understanding. No one, therefore, would have been indignant at such arguments as those which Haeckel has brought forward, had they been used by a half-educated Social Democrat. But it is intolerable that a man who takes a pride in being a representative of science should have allowed himself the same language of presumptuous ignorance, and that, too, in a book which was certain to be read very widely. Accordingly when, just after

Haeckel's book had appeared, the request was addressed to me by a non-theological colleague, that I should reply to the author's monstrous assertions, I considered it a point of honour in a scientific theologian to consent. But as it is a fruitless task, in dealing with an opponent of Christianity, to enter upon a discussion as to how far he understands Christian faith or Christian morality, I decided that I must confine myself to the chapter in Haeckel's book which shows most clearly the author's ignorance of subjects on which it is quite possible to reach scientific certainty, viz., Chapter XVII, entitled "Science and Christianity" (pp. 109-117, Eng. Trans.). A still further limitation was suggested to my mind by the reflection that a merciless exposure of Haeckel's scandalous assertions might lead devout Catholics, or even Protestant zealots, wrongly to believe that these "Popular Studies" were not entitled to the protection which "Science," in virtue of her "freedom," enjoys against § 166 of the Criminal Code.¹ For I too count the freedom of science so great a blessing, that I could not think of provoking an attack upon it which could do no good in the end. But how could I write upon Haeckel's book without expressing my indignation that here, under the garb of "scientific" studies, there have been put in circulation attacks upon Christianity which are as baseless scientifically as morally they are unpardonable? I thought I might escape these difficulties by addressing an "Open Letter," with all right and necessary reserve, to the culprit himself. I published such a letter in the *Christliche Welt* of November 9,

1899.² There I made no more than a mild allusion to the unseemly tone which Haeckel had thought fit to assume ; the quotations stopped short of his most offensive statements ; I contented myself with bringing his ignorance home to him on two particular points. But, apart from this reserve, as Haeckel himself perceived, my letter certainly showed none of the respectful consideration usually paid to a brother Professor. Had *I* received such a letter, and felt that I deserved it, I should have buried myself in the deepest silence for very shame ; on the other hand, had my conscience been clear, and my weapons untarnished, I should have driven the writer's mockery out of him without mercy. Haeckel did neither. In a newly-born review—the *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Kritik und Anti-Kritik* (1 Jahrgang, No. 2, p. 49 f.)—he made a rejoinder, as full of swelling self-conceit as ever, but singularly feeble, and disingenuous in temper, from which no one would gather the tone in which my challenge had been sounded.³ In a supplementary note—and with far greater skill, which failed him, however, as he went on—the Editor of the *Kritik und Anti-kritik*, Dr. Erich Bischoff, of Leipzig, attempted to cover the Jena Professor, at least partially, with the protecting shield of his erudition.⁴

After these replies I did not personally feel it needful to pursue the controversy any further. I was not disturbed even by the fact that Dr. Bischoff distributed a great many copies of this issue of his review as an advertisement. For my "Open

² See Appendix I. ³ See Appendix II.

⁴ See Appendix II.

Letter," of which Dr. Bischoff had prudently refrained from giving his readers any clear idea, had had sufficient publicity. The *Christliche Welt* has more than 4,500 subscribers; several newspapers, including a London newspaper of November 16, 1899, copied my letter in whole or in part; there can be few of Haeckel's colleagues in Jena who have not read it. And any one who compares my letter with Haeckel's reply and Dr. Bischoff's note will see that I have not come off second best.

Besides, I could not but feel that, after what Haeckel and Dr. Bischoff had said, it was impossible to do anything but either be silent or *treat the subject thoroughly in a detailed and scientific fashion*. To give oneself to a detailed treatment of *such* a subject is anything but a pleasant way of spending one's time; nevertheless, in view of Haeckel's undiminished self-conceit, and the absence from Dr. Bischoff's note of any pronouncement on the moral aspect of the case, I have thought it my duty to undertake this further task. For Haeckel's book has already circulated by thousands⁵; it is poisoning the minds of our people, and confirms our Social Democrats in the belief that their dreary materialism and absurd notions about Christianity simply represent the teachings of "science." I am also convinced that no one who reads the following pages of mine can seriously maintain the loftily superior view that it would be better to leave such a man as Professor Haeckel severely alone. I write, not for his sake, but for the thousands who read his book.⁶

Perhaps the fact that their prophet has had

to submit to an attack such as I have made upon him in what follows may serve to sober some of Haeckel's admirers. My aim is this and nothing else—publicly to destroy, as far as all his opinions on Christianity are concerned, the "scientific" authority which Haeckel still persists in claiming.

What I have written will no doubt give the evil-disposed an opportunity to reproach me with having indulged in "denunciation," the danger of which I myself recognized in my "Open Letter." This however I can bear, for I know that my conscience is clear; and I am convinced that, with perfect justice from the subjective point of view, Haeckel may appeal to the freedom of science, and that therefore a criminal charge against him is bound to fail. Moreover, I ask any one whose mistaken zeal might lead him wrongly to suppose that a criminal judge is the best person to restrain writing like Haeckel's within permissible limits, to reflect that a reputation for martyrdom, as was already discovered in the days of the early Church, has a wonderful rehabilitating effect. Nothing could be more foolish than the attempt to make Haeckel "the martyr of impartial science."

If *public opinion* sides with me, that will be the judgment which of all others Professor Haeckel will feel most keenly. And nothing could be better fitted to weaken the force of a judgment so severe than a criminal prosecution. For that would conceal from Professor Haeckel and his admirers that what condemns him is not his "standpoint," but his ignorance.

II

SALADIN'S BOOK

My reply to Professor Haeckel's rejoinder must start with a few words on two preliminary points. Haeckel's rejoinder concludes with the words—

“ Professor Loofs . . . considers it unnecessary to acquaint himself with the remarkable work of the learned and acute English theologian Saladin (Stewart Ross), *God and His Book : The Bible, Where did we get it, and What is it ?* [Translated into German under the title, *Jehovas gesammelte Werke. Eine kritische Untersuchung des jüdisch-christlichen Religionsgebäudes auf Grund der Bibelforschung. Leipzig, Fleischer, 1896.*] As I myself build for the most part on this source, I must refer the reader to the book itself for further details.”

My first duty, accordingly, was to procure Saladin's book. I succeeded in getting the English original from London in five days, but it was no easy matter to come by the German translation which Haeckel had used. On the very day that Haeckel's explanation reached me, I communicated through my bookseller with the above-named Leipzig publisher, requesting him to send me the book direct. But it was only after fourteen days, and a great deal of writing hither and thither, that I succeeded in getting my order executed in a roundabout way, though the book did come into my hands on the previous day by private loan. The Imperial Library in Berlin, the Göttingen and Leipzig University Libraries, even the Jena University Library, do not

possess this remarkable work any more than our own University Library, nor is it to be found in any bookseller's catalogue. In Leipzig it was formerly to be had from the Agency Office of Schaumburg-Fleischer, and this was stated on the original title-page. It appeared, no place or year being given, as published from the "private office of *The Translator*" (who veils his identity under the pseudonym "W. Thunderstruck, with the co-operation of Gylfaginning"). The copy lent to me had pasted on it the note "to be ordered through W. Schaumburg, Zürich I, Rämistrasse 35 III." This note, however, is also out of date. For I learned through a bookseller that the work is now the property of the "Publishing Office of the *Zürich Discussions*." Even then it was only after a reminder, and the lapse of more than a fortnight, that it was actually sent to me from the office. We were told that "the book had been officially suppressed on its appearance," that the author had emigrated to Australia, and that the publisher (resident in a town in West Germany, whose name I refrain from mentioning) was dead. The latter items of information, however, were incorrect; the author is still alive in London, and I have before me a card from the publisher in which he tells me that the book did not appear in the ordinary way of business, that it is only sent direct, and—as actually happened—that it would reach me on a certain day. Is all this not enough of itself to arouse a suspicion that the book belongs to a species of literature which shuns the light?

I have received from England some information

about the author. His name is William Stewart Ross. He was born in 1844, and, after studying theology in Glasgow for a short time, turned his attention to journalism, and since then has become a prolific writer of the freethinking type. He still edits a magazine along these lines: *The Agnostic Journal and Eclectic Review*, London (W. Stewart and Co., 41 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.), of which I have before me vol. xlvii., No. 3, of January 20, of this year. "In England he has never been taken seriously as a theologian"—so the editor of a Christian magazine in London writes to me. But all this will be nothing to Haeckel. It is more important, therefore, to notice that Saladin ranks himself on the side of the laymen as against the theologians.⁷ The title of "an acute English theologian," which Haeckel confers on him, is therefore—quite apart from the "acuteness"—liable to objection even on external grounds.

And that it is wholly unjustifiable the book itself proves. "The collected works of Jehovah" [Germ. *Jehovas gesammelte Werke*] is a free translation—indeed as regards the title free to the last point of bad taste—of the book published in 1887 by the aforesaid house, W. Stewart and Co., London, as above, and entitled: *God and His Book. The Bible, Where did we get it, and What is it?* by Saladin.

The translator is a man of extremely poor education, a man who cannot even distinguish the letters in Hebrew and Greek,⁸ and has so little idea of Latin that (p. 24) he allows the oracle which (according to Ennius) Pyrrhus received: *Ajo te, Aeacida, Romanos vincere posse*, to stand in print, arrayed

in all the blunders with which the compositor's stupidity has deformed it, thus—

“Credo te, Aeacida, Romanos vincereres p.”;

a man who, in quoting the well-known lines [from Goethe's “Zahmen Xenien” II],

“Im Auslegen seid frisch und munter!
Legt ihr's nicht aus, so legt was unter,”

which, out of the treasures of his own knowledge, he adds to Saladin's text (Original, p. 28) offers us the beautiful version (p. 30)—

“Im Auslegen seid hübsch munter,
Legt Ihr nichts aus, so legt was unter”;

a man who occasionally comes to grief even in the spelling of foreign words.⁹

A man such as this has no connexion with “science” whatsoever, and can have had no wish to serve it.

As little can *the book itself* be of service to science. The “remarkable work” which, in an audacious figure of speech, Haeckel describes as “the source on which for the most part he builds,” is nothing but a vulgar pamphlet against the Bible. True, Saladin himself says (Original, p. 131)—

“It is not the Bible and the pretensions it makes for itself that I assail; it is the Bible and the pretensions in regard to it put forth by Protestant Christianity. Taken for what it really is—a collection of more or less connected tracts belonging to times more or less remote, and reflecting as it does the deed and motive of ages and races that are no more—it is a deeply interesting antiquarian study. But here its use and its merits end. That there is anything divine and supernatural about it more than there are about the Vedas and the Koran and the *Times* newspaper, is an utterly untenable hypothesis.”

But in reading the book, one is reminded only of the second half of this statement. In forty-one chapters, of which only the first twelve have any clear logical connexion with each other, the author parades all that he can say in depreciation of the Bible. He frequently addresses himself directly to "Jehovah,"¹⁰ ridicules His doings, criticizes His clumsiness as a writer and editor, or asks Him captious questions. Elsewhere he vents his spleen upon the "Ghost"¹¹ who wrote the books of the Bible, makes fun of His literary successes, and opines that the net gain His Book has brought in must already have made Him the wealthiest member of the Trinity (p. 178). So that the book teems with the most offensive blasphemies. The worst of them I cannot repeat, but a sufficient idea of their character may be gathered from the quotations I shall have occasion to give in the following pages.

The scholarship at the author's command is—to use his own jargon—that of "John Smith, the man in the street," whose "sound common-sense," i.e. the mental deposit of the culture of past ages, furnishes him with a number of arguments against a view of the Bible which was the official view 200 years ago, but is no longer held even by the most conservative of scientific theologians. Of what has been achieved by historical and critical study of the Bible, Saladin knows nothing—except some names (p. 241). His theological attainments essentially consist in the wisdom that has come down to him, in part directly, in part indirectly, from the far-away free-thinkers of the eighteenth century. This he has combined with ideas which are commonplace to the contem-

porary of modern natural science, with the sallies of his own genius, and the monstrosities of his own ignorance ; and the materials so furnished he has striven to render palatable to modern freethought by the literary methods of the gutter and the wit of the dram-shop.

It would be easier to pick the vermin from the coat of a vagrant dog than to collect the scientific follies which mark the volume on every page ; and in dealing with a man who describes Tertullian as a " black servant " of God, because he " was a native of Africa " (p. 70), no scholar who knows how to distinguish brass from gold will expect of me such nauseous work. I confine myself to giving an account of the initial arguments of the book, that the reader may have an idea of its general nature ; thereafter I shall illustrate by some examples the ignorance, coarseness, and impudence which stamp the volume with its true character.

Once upon a time, to occupy His eternity (p. 12), God wrote a number of " holy " books. Whether these were only the canonical books of the Old Testament, or those also which were " excluded the Canon without apparent reason,"¹² as well as the lost Apocrypha, and " other writings full of fables and errors, which are lost,"¹³ it is impossible to say, as " the Ghost writes " a style " so perplexingly like John Smith " (p. 5). At least Saladin, in an address to Jehovah, confesses, " with due deference," that he " cannot for his life determine where Smith ends and Jehovah begins " (p. 13). Enough ; Jehovah wrote a book. But His methods of publication were peculiar. He gave His book in keeping to the Jews,

placing it in the ark, "a shittim-wood box of holy nick-nacks,"¹⁴ in which He took great interest, coming down now and again to dance upon the lid" (p. 13), or to sit "on the top of his shittim-wood box, just as you have seen a performing monkey sit on the top of a travelling hurdy-gurdy" (p. 15). But in Solomon's time [*circa* 970-930, B.C.], when the ark was opened (1 Kings viii. 9), the Book of the Law was not in it.¹⁵ Three hundred and fifty years after Solomon's time, when the ark was opened "the Book was found again" (2 Kings xxii. 8); "there was life in the old dog yet, and in that life lay hidden the bolt of Death" (p. 17).¹⁶ But once more it disappeared; it was burnt. Then, 150 years after its rediscovery, Ezra reproduced it "out of his own head" (p. 20)—"it" being the whole book of Jehovah, the entire Bible.

"If anything at all be certain in regard to such a doubtful quantity as the Old Testament, it is certain that it is the production of Ezra" (p. 25).

This, then, is Saladin's "critical" view of the origin of the Old Testament! On what grounds his opinion really rests, he does not himself know. He only knows that many of the Church Fathers thought that Ezra reproduced the books of the Old Testament which were lost during the Babylonian exile (p. 25 f.). He does indeed quote the words of Ezra, "Thy law is burnt, therefore no man knoweth the things that are done of Thee"; he relates also how, with the assistance of five scribes, Ezra wrote in forty days, the books which had been burnt (p. 21 f.); but from what source this saying of Ezra, or this story, is drawn, there is not a note to say. It is

really from the so-called "4th Book of Esdras," an apocryphal work of the nineties of the first century A.D.¹⁷ That the story is nothing but an incredible legend every one knows who has ever studied the Old Testament scientifically. The man who thinks it the most certain thing known about the Old Testament only betrays his total ignorance of the life and times of the Old Testament prophets (whose historical situation we can fix with certainty), of Old Testament criticism, and of scientific history—nay more, shows that he has not the faintest idea of the standards which science employs in determining any historical fact.

Having now brought his historical investigation to a close, Saladin turns to criticism. First of all, he expatiates upon "inspiration." The parsons translate *πνεῦμα* by Spirit; but properly translated the Holy Spirit is simply the "Holy Wind."

"If Ezra produced the twenty-two books, he must have suffered from a far more severe attack of inspiration than Moses had had, who produced only five books. In fact . . . the wonder is that, from the over-dose, Ezra did not burst (p. 26).

"The 'holy men of God'—the Ezras, the Pauls, and the rest of them—sitting, pen in hand, with terribly-distended abdomens, producing the Bible, 'the source of England's greatness,' is a burlesque. . . . In beatific vision, I behold the holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Wind, each time they dip their pen into the ink with the one hand they give their abdomen a blow with the other, to try whether it is tense enough to emit the drum-like sound indicative that the possessor is just in the proper key for Bible-writing."

Saladin next turns to particular faults in the inspired book. He begins by passing two censures which open a terribly clear vista into the profound depths of his ignorance—(1) Ezra wrote Hebrew,

and wrote it in *Chaldean characters* (p. 34); and (2) not only was Hebrew at that time a dead language (! p. 34), it is at best "a language suited only to a dove or a savage" (p. 40), for when written it has no vowels.

"Let my reader picture to himself a language so rude and primitive that it bungled away with its twenty-two consonants, and without a single vowel, and he will have some idea of how clearly intelligible God made himself!" (p. 33).

Saladin illustrates this by a comparison. A reporter who writes Pitman's shorthand, in which the vowels are indicated by points, experiences less difficulty in taking down a speech than in deciphering a stenographic report in which he had no time to insert the vowels. Then Saladin proceeds:

"To understand how impracticable it is to make either head or tail of the Holy Ghost's unvowelled Hebrew, we must suppose the reporter has to put vowels into a speech so as to make sense of it, say a thousand years after the speech was delivered, and say five centuries after the language in which it was delivered had become a *dead language*! He might make the first four letters in Genesis—the consonants B R S T—into *burst*, *bearest*, *barest*, *borest*, *breast*, *abreast*, etc., at option, according to his conception of what the Holy Ghost might have meant" (p. 34).

The man who can write such appalling nonsense understands no more of Hebrew than the crows do of Sunday. It is of course quite unknown to our erudite friend that for centuries Syriac and Arabic were in the same condemnation with Hebrew. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that his acquaintance with Hebrew writing should be just as ludicrously meagre. It is certainly a Jewish tradition that Ezra brought the later Hebrew writing with him from the Exile; but this tradition is

untenable. The so-called "Aramaic" writing—not, as it was formerly called, the "Chaldean"—in its later form, the so-called "square writing" (which arose after the fourth century, or at earliest after 300 A.D.), strengthened as it was by the simultaneous spread of the Aramaic language, *gradually* superseded the old Hebrew writing.¹⁸ The man who can assert that Ezra wrote his Hebrew in Chaldean characters "apparently because the then Jews did not know even the very letters of Hebrew" (p. 34), is in a condition of absolute ignorance regarding the whole modern study, as based on inscriptions, of the development of Hebrew writing. How gross this ignorance is Saladin shows when, on p. 35, and also on his title-page, he sets before his readers a fac-simile of five lines from a Biblical manuscript [belonging at earliest to the tenth century] written in the modern square writing,

"that the English reader may form some idea . . . of what is considered very ancient Hebrew, or as near as can be obtained to the true hand-writing of the Holy Ghost"—that is, in Saladin's opinion, the writing of Ezra *circa* 444 B.C."

It is not necessary that I should further illustrate the depths of Saladin's "scientific ignorance," from his discussion of the history of the Hebrew language, or the amateur rubbish he writes about the number of *variae lectiones*. But I may give a few more examples to show the high level of his criticism on matters of fact, as well as the elevation of his tone.

In the ninth chapter he settles to his own satisfaction the part of the Scripture we "can most easily dig eternal life out of."

" Well, my busy friends, you can find out what *part* of the Scripture is most important from the fact of Jehovah giving it *twice over, word for word*. I have already advised you that the nineteenth chapter of 2 Kings and the thirty-seventh chapter of Isaiah are identical. This is evidently Jehovah's crack chapter, the one he prides himself upon, the one he recites to Sarah and the angels and the beatific beasts on his birthday, and other occasions of high junketting in the kingdom of heaven " (p. 61).

He then advises those who wish to be saved to commit to memory two verses of this favourite chapter of Jehovah. First *v.* 29, then *v.* 36 :

" And it came to pass that night the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four-score and five thousand : and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses." ¹⁹

To this question Saladin appends the following ribald comments :

" How surprised those Assyrians must have been when they got up in the morning and found ' they were all dead corpses ' ! You astonished them that time, Jehovah. Wouldn't even *you* be astonished if you got up in the morning and found yourself a corpse ? It is not on record what any dead Assyrian said : but a Cockney under the same circumstances would get up, rub his eyes, and ejaculate : ' A say, Bill, I'se *dead* ! Tell the ole 'oman I've snuffed it. The — worms are already a crawlin' in my thunderin' liver, and I'se been a corpse for four bloomin' hours. Bury me decent like " (p. 63 f.).

In the next chapter among other things Saladin discusses the difficulties of the story of the Exodus from Egypt, which were far more cleverly brought out long ago by Reimarus in the fourth of the Wolfenbüttel Fragments (Hempel, xv. 177 ff.).

" We find from a census taken at a particular period (Exodus xxxviii. 26) that, making the usual allowance of five persons to each male over twenty, we have, roughly, 3,000,000 people in all.

There were, we are assured [Saladin evidently does not know who 'assures' us: the passage is Num. iii. 43], 22,273 first-born males: allow for the same number of first-born females, and we get a total of 44,546. If you divide the 3,000,000 by the number of mothers, you get a total of about *sixty-eight children for each mother*. To please the Lord and give him something to write about, the women of the house of Israel must, then, like rabbits, have brought forth litters of eight or ten at a time, etc." (p. 71).²⁰

In the next chapter he recurs yet again to—

"the poor buffoon of a deity that, by his literary performances, makes certain Jewish women have litters of ten or twelve children at a time. This deity that makes a woman pregnant with ten or twelve children, and, having one on her back, one in her arms, and thirty or forty in a row behind, run out of Egypt, at the rate of about seventy miles an hour, may be a suitable enough fetish for those who find life a pantomime or a burlesque; but he is not suitable for me, who find life a tragedy, solemn and earnest" (p. 73).

After this, Saladin discusses the "reasons why God did not produce a better book." He finds them in "domestic complications and infelicities in the Divine family circle." These pages are too vile to be reproduced here. At the close Mary is mentioned again. Among other things, *à propos* of the "many bottles of her milk in the convents of Christendom," Saladin treats himself here to the pointless jest that through her mighty achievements "in the lactation line," Mary must have been of special advantage to Jehovah, and then concludes this shocking chapter with the following ribaldries:

"But we may place as a set-off against this the report of a recent tourist in Italy, who (writing in the *Boston Investigator*) asserts that 150 convents have each the headdress of the Virgin. What a heavy sum she must have run up for bonnets! To suppose that a man in the position of Joseph the Carpenter paid

for these bonnets is sheer nonsense. No doubt 'when he discovered the extravagant character of 'the Virgin,' he inserted an advertisement in the *Jerusalem Gazette and Bethlehem Courier* :

"**I** JOSEPH, CARPENTER AND WHEELWRIGHT, of Jezebel St., Nazareth, do hereby GIVE NOTICE that, after the 13th of this month Nisan, I will not hold myself responsible for debts contracted by my wife MARY, usually nick-named 'THE VIRGIN.'

"No doubt Jehovah had to put his hand deep in his breeches' pocket and pay for these bonnets. Pestered by his poor relations, and especially by his horrible Mary, all things considered, Jehovah has written remarkably well. I am free to admit it to be a wonderful thing, under the circumstances, that the Bible is such a sensible book as it is" (p. 79 f.).

This will be sufficient to present Saladin in his true colours ! Every one of my readers who understands the nature of serious scientific work, and has a genuine feeling for the honour of writing and the dignity of literature, will be convinced, I think, that this "remarkable work, by a learned and acute English theologian," is simply the vile production of a coarse and ignorant journalist of the lowest order. From some quotations which Haeckel gives from his "authority," I was prepared to find that "Saladin" must be a thoroughly bad book ; still, I did not expect to find such wretched stuff in a book used and commended by a brother Professor. It was a new discovery to me that Professor Haeckel *has sunk so far beneath the level of a respectable and self-respecting scholar* as to praise in high tones a book such as this.

III

HAECKEL'S EVASION OF THE POINT AT ISSUE

THE second preliminary point in Haeckel's rejoinder which must be dealt with occurs in the first paragraph after the introductory words. Haeckel writes : ²¹

"For a complete reply to this 'Open Letter' I have neither time nor inclination ; nor would anything of the kind lead to a mutual understanding, for our scientific standpoints are profoundly and fundamentally different. As a Christian theologian, Professor Loofs is *still entangled in the naive belief in miracles characteristic of the Middle Ages, and in particular for the conception of Christ he accepts a supernatural antecedent, the 'overshadowing by the Holy Ghost.'* I, on the contrary, as an empirical student of nature, am compelled—like all natural scientists of the present day—to *reject all miracle*, and to seek to explain every phenomenon by its natural causes. Consequently, even as regards the conception of Christ, I must ask who the *father* was that brought about conception in the case of the 'Virgin Mary.'"

This is a disingenuous evasion of the point at issue. For in my "Open Letter" I had written :

"*The question between us is not that of the historicity of Luke ii. and Matthew i. ; this I would expressly emphasise.*" ²² If you are interested to know my views on that point, I beg you to turn up and read the *Real-Encyclopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, 3. Aufl. Bd. iv. S. 19. The question between us is rather whether a healthy scientific conscience can allow the historicity of these narratives to be assailed by arguments which—to say nothing of their tone, which is certainly singular

in a man of education, and shows no respect for the religious susceptibilities of other people—betray an entire lack of sympathy with the scientific spirit, and rather resemble the braggadocio of a Cockney sportsman or the heroics of a Don Quixote."

Professor Haeckel ignores this perfectly explicit declaration that the question between us is *not* that of the historicity of the narrative in Luke ii. and Matthew i., the narrative, i.e., of the Virgin-Birth; he takes no notice of my reference to the *Real-Encyclopädie*, iv. 19; he simply writes in the wild style which suits his purpose. Now this is dishonourable.²³ As Haeckel ignores the point, I may make the following quotation from the article referred to (*Real-Encyclopädie*, vol. iv. Article "Christology—Ecclesiastical Doctrine"). In the preceding paragraphs I had been dealing with the Christological views current in certain Jewish-Christian circles in the first centuries, and I proceed as follows (p. 19):²⁴

"The belief that Jesus was Joseph's son can be proved to have existed, in extra-Biblical Christian circles of the ancient Church, only among these Jewish-Christians; and that the belief was not universally held by the Palestinian Jewish-Christians is obvious, for Matthew i. and Luke ii. themselves are based on Palestinian Jewish-Christian traditions. *At the same time, we ought not to minimise the importance of the fact that there can with indubitable historical certainty be proved to have existed Christians who held Jesus to be a son of Joseph.* For no one can, with a good conscience, trace the belief that Jesus was Joseph's son to an original rejection of the theory of partheno-genesis. But if here we have tradition before us, it is a weighty instance against those who deny the validity of the *argumentum e silentio* as applied to Mark, John and Paul, and dispute the positive cogency of the genealogies (Matt. i. 1 ff.; Luke iii. 23 ff.)²⁵ and of the σπέρμα Δαυείδ in Rom. i. 3. Besides, it is no mere arbitrary thesis that Matthew i. 18 ff. and Luke ii. 1 ff. represent one

of the latest strata of the Biblical tradition. Or are we to shelter these narratives too beneath the idea that the first disciples passed through a progressive development in the knowledge of truth? Why, then, not claim the same shelter for the narratives of these Gospels which circulated alongside of our present Gospels before the close of the Canon? For Catholic thinkers the answer is easy; for them the Canon rests on the authority of the Church. But the Protestant, who would legitimate the New Testament Scriptures 'as a whole' by appealing to the activity of the Holy Spirit, does so without Scriptural authority, and is operating with ideas before which it would be impossible to justify Luther's German Bibles, which actually exclude the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistles of James and Jude, and the Apocalypse from the list of apostolic authorities. None of the dogmatic reasons for asserting partheno-genesis which urge its indispensability will bear examination in the light of the history of dogma. That the sinlessness of Jesus can only be explained on this theory is an opinion which 1 Cor. vii. 14 proves to be secondary, an opinion which cannot be shown to have existed in the Church before Tertullian, and even after Tertullian was not universal. The opinion, too, which has been repeatedly asserted of late, that pre-existence demands partheno-genesis, is equally unfounded. One who does not feel that Paul and John are against him on this point must still acknowledge that only those forms of Christology, which are incompatible with Jesus' natural human development, really exclude the idea of His descent from Joseph *κατὰ σάρκα*. For it is impossible to see why there should be a difference between natural birth and natural growth from the beginnings of conception onwards—unless, indeed, we fall back again on the idea which has wrongly associated with Psalm li. 7 the falsely ascetic condemnation of natural life."

No reader of true feeling will blame me for hesitating to give a full exposition of my own critical position towards the narratives in Matthew i. and Luke ii. to my colleague of Jena, who had *con amore* dragged the birth-story of Jesus through the filth of Jewish slanders. It was surely enough, that by referring to the passage I have cited from the *Real-*

Encyclopädie, I “*expressly emphasized*” the fact that “the question between us was *not* about the historicity of Matthew i. and Luke ii.”

Either Professor Haeckel has, by careless reading, failed to notice any reference to my article—and even this is disingenuous polemic—or, and this were still more dishonourable, he has, despite his own better knowledge, ignored my critical position towards the narrative he had attacked. In either case both he and Dr. Bischoff have evaded “the chief point in dispute.” I am compelled, therefore, to place it right in the forefront. And since Professor Haeckel has not felt the more courteous polemic of the “Open Letter” to be sufficient, I must use greater plainness of speech. The point in dispute is whether the nature of the attacks upon Christianity in which Professor Haeckel has indulged, (1) by their contents, and (2) by their tone, still leaves it possible to suppose that he has “a healthy scientific conscience.” If he has not, *then scientifically he is no longer to be taken seriously. And that he has not, I intend to show.* I intend to prove that Professor Haeckel, by the ignorance which he has displayed, and the tone in which he has indulged, has forfeited the right to rank as a scientific writer in circles competent to judge.

IV

THE "SCIENTIFIC" CHARACTER OF HAECKEL'S SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER

I. "In order to appreciate correctly the extreme importance of Christianity in regard to the entire history of civilization, and particularly its fundamental opposition to reason and science," Haeckel, in the seventeenth chapter of his book, casts "a hasty glance" over the principal stages of the history of Christianity.

"We distinguish"—he says (p. 110)—"four chief periods: (1) primitive Christianity (the first three centuries); (2) Papal Christianity (twelve centuries, from the fourth to the fifteenth); (3) the Reformation (three centuries, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth); (4) modern pseudo-Christianity (the nineteenth century)."

This division of Church history of itself proves that Haeckel knows as much of that subject as the blind do of colour. One's only doubt is where the ignorance is greatest. Is it in the treatment of "primitive Christianity"? It might seem so, for (p. 111) Haeckel declares:

"For the rest, the Christians of the early centuries were generally pure Communists, sometimes 'Social Democrats,' who, according to the prevailing theory in Germany to-day, ought to have been exterminated with fire and sword."

Or is it the treatment of "Papal Christianity,"

beginning about 300 A.D. ? It might seem so, from pp. 113 and 111 :

“ Therewith (i.e. with Luther’s theses) was forced the iron door of the prison in which Papal *absolutism* had detained fettered reason *for 1,200 years.*”

“ During a period of 1,200 years, from the fourth to the sixteenth century, the Papacy almost absolutely controlled the spiritual life of Europe.”

Or in the treatment of the age of the Reformation, which is made to extend to the end of the eighteenth century ?

Haeckel is not even sure of his divisions : on p. 113 he actually makes the Middle Ages begin with “ the founding of Christianity.”

“ The history of civilization, which we are so fond of calling ‘ the history of the world,’ enters upon its third period with the Reformation of the Christian Church, just as its second period begins with the founding of Christianity.”

Perhaps what he meant here was “ the founding of the State Church,” for Haeckel too believes—and we cannot find fault with him, for the error is still to be found in the majority of school-books, and even in works on Church history—that Constantine “ raised Christianity to the position of a State religion ” (p. 112).²⁶

There is no need to refute in detail all the nonsensical assertions which are contained in the passages I have cited, and which proclaim to what a “ high level ” Haeckel’s science can rise, freed as it is from all the restraining fetters of tradition. At least the assertion that the age of “ *Papal absolutism* ” began with the fourth century, and that thereafter the Papacy controlled the spiritual life

of *Europe*, is so absurd as not to be worth refuting. Just a word or two, however, about the "communism" of "primitive Christianity" (the senseless intrusion of the idea "Social Democrat" I pass by, as too ludicrous for notice).

Even as regards the age of really "primitive Christianity," 1 Thess. ii. 9; 1 Cor. xi. 21 f.; Jas. i. 9, 10, ii. 2-6; 1 Tim. vi. 17, and other passages prove how mistaken it would be to generalize from what a single passage in the Acts of the Apostles (ii. 44)—which in its first section is a very secondary source—tells us about the community of goods in the earliest Church of Jerusalem. And that the Christians of the second and third centuries were no band of communists is a matter of absolute certainty to any one who knows the literature of the time. No doubt one might hunt up single sentences which have a communistic ring, and are enough to "convince" readers of social-democratic books. "We have all things in common, except our wives,"²⁷ says Tertullian in the year 197 A.D. But even such passages are simply rhetorical expressions of the thought that the liberality of brotherly love levels up social contrasts, or at least ought to do so. That the Church of the second and third centuries was not communistic in its ideal is put beyond all question by its attitude to slavery, by the value it placed upon "alms," by what we know of the wealth of individual members (e.g. Cyprian), and of the style of living generally adopted by the bishops in the end of the third century.²⁸ In his treatise, *Quis Dives Salvetur*, Clement of Alexandria discusses the attitude of Christians to wealth in the soundest

possible fashion. It would of course be equally wrong to generalize from this particular instance ; in point of fact the ascetic temper of many tended to confuse their theoretical opinions. Still, *in practice* the Church of that day as a whole took up exactly the same position as Clement towards wealthy believers.

2. At the beginning of the section on primitive Christianity, Haeckel follows up his division of the subject-matter of Church History with a paragraph on the sources for the history of the origins of Christianity—the Gospels and the Pauline Epistles. The first part of this paragraph, which is concerned with the Gospels, I have already criticized in my “Open Letter.” To my arguments there adduced Haeckel has made no reply. Hence, as in his rejoinder he has dealt with the *second* point touched on in my “Open Letter,” the aversion to controversy which he has there expressed must relate to this point. This I quite understand, for here self-justification was impossible. Nevertheless I must recur to the subject, inasmuch as Dr. Bischoff in his note has set himself, with the shield of scientific impartiality, to defend the object of my attack. In the interval, it is true, Dr. Bischoff has come to see how untenable his semi-defence of Haeckel is ; yet it will conduce to the clearness of the subject, if I do not simply toss his objections summarily aside. I have therefore to make the following observations, referring my readers to my “Open Letter.”

(a) Dr. Bischoff (p. 51) felt it “hardly in keeping with scientific polemic” that I “should waste seven

lines on the harmless misprint ' 327.' " But no intelligent reader of my " Open Letter " will imagine for one moment that I considered the " milder hypothesis " that Haeckel's figures were a mere misprint the more probable. Had this " milder hypothesis " been correct, Dr. Bischoff's lecture on scientific propriety would have been justified. But Dr. Bischoff is evidently as guilty of a hasty perusal of the book as I ; for on p. 112 too Haeckel dates the Council of Nicaea, 327. And that this twice-repeated mistake is no " harmless misprint " may be seen from the " authority " on which Haeckel " for the most part relies." On p. 178 Saladin writes :

" This mass of literature [he means the later Gospels, etc.] became by and bye rather bulky and unwieldy ; so about [German translation, *in*] the year 327 A.D. a council of 318 bishops²⁹ was convened at Nice." [The number 318 is legendary : the authoritative tradition says " about 300 " ; the list of signatures preserved is incomplete. Cf. *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina*, ed. Gelzer, Hilgenfeld, Cuntz, Leipzig, 1898.]

Haeckel must have known that my polite banter was justified. Accordingly he held his tongue. Is he not sorry for his defender, whose shield, instead of receiving the blow, thus fails him ?

(b) And this happens not merely once, but twice. For even as regards the worse offence against scientific propriety which Dr. Bischoff's keen eye detects viz. the ten lines about Pappus, I am perfectly innocent. When writing my " Open Letter," I was already so firmly convinced of Haeckel's ignorance that I risked the jest, although naturally I knew just as well as Dr. Bischoff that one speaks of " Erasmus' New Testament " when one means his *edition*. As a matter of fact Haeckel did think that

Pappus was a Church Father, because—well, because the authority on which for the most part he relies (as in the whole pretty story of the “jumping books”), told him so. Saladin says (p. 172):

“Pappus, in his *Synodicon*, gives quite another version of the fixing of the Canon at this Nicene Council. He tells us that, etc.”

(c) Dr. Bischoff plunged into arguments also on matters of fact, and attempted to prove that Haeckel's assertion that our four Gospels were selected from the heap of apocryphal Gospels at the Synod of Nicaea was not so atrocious after all. Although in 1891 he gained a “Leaving Certificate” for religious knowledge, and thus may have been in some sort of touch with the work of scientific theology, Dr. Bischoff has here exposed himself to the condemnation which Professor A. Harnack, of Berlin—whose international reputation and scientific impartiality even his opponents cannot deny—passed on dilettantism in theology, four weeks after my “Open Letter,” in No. 49 of the *Christliche Welt*, December 7, 1899. In the interests of the subject, not in direct polemic against Dr. Bischoff, I shall here quote his words. He writes:

“The year 1899 has brought us the *Riddle of the Universe* by Haeckel, and the second part of the *Ecclesiastical Forgeries* by Thudichum. The first avers that at the Council of Nicaea the four Gospels were selected or separated out by a deceptive sleight-of-hand trick, from a heap of forged and contradictory manuscripts; the latter professes to have proved that the Epistle to the Hebrews is a forgery of the fourth century. The former is Professor of Zoology at Jena, the latter Professor of Church Law at Tübingen. Both have theological colleagues alongside of them. The one in his time enjoyed the acquaintance of Hase and Lipsius, the other of Weizsäcker, to mention no

other names. But evidently both of them felt such distrust of their theological colleagues, one and all, that they preferred not to consult them. Not only so; they distrust the entire theological work of this century. Despite it all, the zoologist will rather accept the absurdest fables he can hunt up; the jurist prefers to discredit himself by giving free rein to his independence of mind.

"But have they really discredited themselves in the eyes of all educated Germans into whose hands their writings fall? When Bautz, the Professor of Catholic Theology in Münster, says that volcanoes are a proof of the existence of purgatory, it is reproduced in all the newspapers, and the poor man is condemned for ever. But a man may say the most foolish things about books of the Bible, may toss aside facts which no expert questions, may scout the evidence of original documents, may lift his voice in public without caring one iota for scientific accuracy—and yet maintain his reputation as a scholar and professor!

"Why is this? . . . In themselves the results arrived at by Messrs. Haeckel and Thudichum are simply ridiculous; but, accustomed as we are as theologians to study the serious aspect of things, we must not rest content with ridicule. We must strive to learn the lesson that the existence of such wretched fabrications teach us. And that lesson is that theological science is by no means held as yet in complete respect, for it has not yet purged its old guilt, etc."

Dr. Bischoff was certainly right in saying that the author of the *Synodicon* may also have been thinking of the Gospels. I regarded this view as impossible, because I believed that apocryphal *Gospels*, as possible rivals of the canonical Gospels, were no longer within the range of vision of so late a writer. Still, I admit, he may have been thinking of them. Whether he really did so, as Dr. Bischoff supposed or supposes, cannot be ascertained. But I am not in the least concerned to criticize his assumption. What this late writer thought is of no importance whatever; and the point has simply no bearing on my case. My argument rested on the

two theses, (1) the Nicene Council took nothing at all to do with fixing the Canon; (2) had it done so, the selection of the canonical Gospels would have been unnecessary, for the number of the Gospels, four, was already fixed during the last quarter of the second century. It was against these positions that Dr. Bischoff's amateur attacks were directed. Since then Dr. Bischoff has himself freely acknowledged how little weight his objections have as against the consensus of scientific theologians. Still, in the interests of truth, I will state the proof for both of my theses.

(a) "The idea that at the Council of Nicaea discussions also took place on the question of the Canon, rests on what has long been known to be a misinterpretation of Baronius" (*Annales ad Ann.* 97, No. 7)—so said Credner forty years ago³⁰ (cf. Augusti, *Versuch einer historisch-dogmat. Einleitung in die hl. Schrift*, S. 217). The silence of Eusebius, the silence of Constantine's letters referring to the Synod, the silence of the lists of canonical books given by Athanasius and Gregory Nazianzus, the fluctuations of opinion even after the Nicene Council—all these facts absolutely exclude the idea that the Nicene Council took anything to do with fixing the Canon.

(b) The remark in Jerome to which I drew Dr. Bischoff's attention: *hunc librum (Judith) synodus Nicaena in numero sanctarum scripturarum legitur computasse*, "may quite well be taken in the sense that in some discussion or other the Nicene Fathers cited and used the Book of Judith as canonical, and thus as a matter of fact recognized it" (Hefele,

Konziliengeschichte, I², p. 371). And it was really unnecessary "to remind a Professor of Church History of the Gospels of the Hebrews." For as a Church historian I am perfectly well aware (1) that a number of Church Fathers, and these the very men who had never seen the Gospel of the Hebrews, wrongly regarded that Gospel as a Hebrew form of the Gospel of Matthew, and thus not a fifth Gospel in addition to the other four; (2) that the Gospel of the Hebrews was the Gospel of a group of Jewish Christians which existed alongside of the Catholic Church from the last quarter of the second century, so that their Gospel proves nothing for the Church; (3) that Clement of Alexandria (end of the second century) still unhesitatingly cites the Gospel of the Hebrews, even though he knows the Gospel Canon,³¹ but that it is sufficiently evident from the way in which Origen adduces it³² that the Canon had by this time forbidden its unqualified use.³³

(c) "The fact that only four Gospels were recognized in the Church since the time of Irenaeus, Clement, and Tertullian" is acknowledged in present-day scientific theology, and Origen, to whose authority Dr. Bischoff appeals, says expressly: *Et ut sciatis, non solum quatuor evangelia, sed plurima esse conscripta, e quibus haec, quae habemus, electa sunt et tradita ecclesiis . . . Ecclesia quatuor habet evangelia, haereses plurima, e quibus quoddam scribitur secundum Aegyptios, aliud juxta duodecim apostolos.*³⁴

3. After this exhibition of his ignorance in regard to the history of the Gospels, Haeckel turns to the Pauline Epistles.

"The most important sources after the Gospels, as is well

known, are the fourteen (generally forged) Epistles of the Apostle Paul. The genuine Pauline Epistles (*three* in number according to recent criticism—to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians) were all written before the canonical Gospels" (p. 111).

What Haeckel says here about "recent" criticism really refers to the criticism of the Tübingen School in the 'forties of the nineteenth century. Thence also is derived Haeckel's information as to the date of the Gospels, set forth in the section already discussed. The first three Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), it is alleged, came into existence in the beginning of the second century, the Gospel according to John about 150 A.D. But the criticism which is really "recent" has seen long ago that the criticism of the "Baurian" or "Tübingen" School far overshot the mark. Even Haeckel's colleague in Jena, Hilgenfeld, who is a disciple of Baur, and still in a modified fashion defends Tübingen traditions, in his *Introduction* (1875) accepted the authenticity of seven Pauline Epistles (1 Thess., Rom., 1 and 2 Cor., Gal., Philem., Phil.), and since that date criticism has become far more conservative, even criticism which no one would suspect of traditionalism. Jülicher describes as pseudo-Pauline only the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Pastoral Epistles. Of these the former does not even claim to be Pauline, and it was only after the middle of the fourth century that it was accepted in the West as an Epistle of Paul (Jülicher, *Einleitung*, p. 101); while even in regard to the Pastoral Epistles—which I also regard as pseudo-Pauline—it is possible to believe, with Krüger³⁵ and others, that their author may have had before him genuine

letters or fragments of letters addressed to both Timothy and Titus. In the same way it may fairly be taken as the consensus of critics to-day that the first three Gospels belong to the first century, to the time between about 65 A.D. and 100 A.D.—only for Luke Jülicher leaves open the time between 80 A.D. and 120 A.D.—and that the Gospel of John came into existence certainly before 125 A.D. In his *Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur* Harnack fixes the date of the Gospel of Mark at 65–70 A.D., that of Matthew at 70–75 A.D., that of Luke at 78–93 A.D., and, lastly, that of the Gospel of John, which he does not regard as Johanneine, at 80–110 A.D., and in the preface of the same book he writes as follows (p. x.) :

“There will come a time, and it is already drawing on, when men will no longer trouble themselves much about the decipherment of literary-historical problems in the domain of primitive Christianity, simply because all that can be made out in this region has already won universal recognition—viz. the fact that, essentially, and apart from a few important exceptions, tradition is right.”

It is thus beyond question that the ideas paraded by Haeckel about the date of the New Testament writings do not stand on the “high level” of science. Not to speak of the Catholic, but not Protestant, enumeration of the Pauline Epistles as fourteen, we may see to how low a depth Haeckel’s ignorance descends, from the fact that the four Pauline Epistles regarded as genuine by F. C. Baur are reckoned by Haeckel as *three*. He does not even know that there are two Epistles to the Corinthians! And a man like this, who cannot even furnish as much Christian knowledge as a child in a Board School,

sets up as an authority on "Science and Christianity" !

4. That the next few pages do not present so many occasions of offence as those we have already examined is really due to the fact that Haeckel confines himself here to more general reflections. True, even these prove that he has no knowledge of the subject. His statements about the condition of affairs in the Middle Ages (pp. 111-113) are certainly calculated to make the enlightened Philistine shudder, but as "science" they stand on a very low level, if indeed caricatures of such a type deserve to be called scientific at all. Still, it lies in the very nature of things that easily demonstrable blunders occur less frequently amid these more general reflections ; it is only at particular points that Haeckel's ignorance can be demonstrated off hand. At the same time even these pages afford not a few instances of what ranks with Haeckel as "science." Let me cull a few of them.³⁷

(a) "Hence the advanced theology of modern times constructs its 'ideal Christianity' rather on the basis of the Pauline Epistles than on the Gospels, so that it has been called 'Paulinism'" (p. 111).

The first part of this sentence is the exact opposite of the truth—for the return to the words of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels and the simultaneous rejection of the Pauline "dogmatic theology" is the characteristic tendency of present-day liberal theology—while in the concluding part of the sentence we have a ludicrous *quid pro quo*.

(b) "Recent historical investigation teaches that Paul's

father was of Greek nationality, and his mother of Jewish" (p. III).

This statement is pure nonsense. "For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin" (Rom. xi. 1); "circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews," etc. (Phil. iii. 5; cf. also 2 Cor. xi. 22). These are Paul's own words; and the expression which is put into his mouth in Acts xxiii. 6—"I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee"³⁸—is also undoubtedly authentic.

(c) "Of the 410,000,000 [Eng. Trans. 500,000,000] Christians who are scattered over the earth, the majority, viz. 225,000,000, are Roman Catholics, only 75,000,000 belong to the Greek Church, and 110,000,000 are Protestants. . . . In Asia Buddhism still reckons 503,000,000 followers, the Brahmanic religion 138,000,000, and Islam 120,000,000" (p. III).

The worthlessness of these statistics, as far at least as the number of Christians is concerned, can be proved by the simple expedient of pointing out their source; Haeckel has taken these figures from Saladin (p. 145). Not only we theologians, but statisticians and geographers, give quite different figures. Hübner's *Geographico-Statistical Tables*, edited by Professor Fr. v. Juraschek, two years ago reckoned the number of Roman Catholics at 254,500,000, that of Greek Catholics at 106,480,000, that of Protestants at 165,830,000, that of "other Christians" at 8,130,000 (47th edition for 1898, p. 91); that is, they reckon the Christians at 535,000,000. And the Göttingen geographer, Professor Hermann Wagner, a year ago, gave the number of Christians as 556,000,000.³⁹

The figures which Haeckel gives for Asia are just as inaccurate. In regard to the Buddhists, certainly, there prevails great statistical confusion ; 470, 367, 315, 245, and 100 millions are given by different authorities.⁴⁰ Haeckel puts them at 503 millions. The discrepancy of the numbers is due to the fact that those who give the larger figures have counted all the Chinese and Japanese as Buddhists. Accurate figures are not possible, for properly to discriminate the Buddhists, the Taoists, the Shintoists, and the Confucians is impracticable. Professor v. Juraschek reckons the number of Buddhists in Asia as 120,750,000, that of Brahmans as 214,370,000, that of Mohammedans as 127,260,000.

(d) "The ultramontane professor of history at Frankfort, Johannes Janssen, affords a striking example of the length they [i.e. the Ultramontanes] will go in distorting historical truth ; his much-read works (especially his *History of the German People since the Middle Ages*, of which there have been many editions) are marred by falsification to an incredible extent" (p. 112).

Haeckel does not seem to be aware that Janssen died so long ago as December 24, 1891 ; it is clear, too, that he knows nothing of Janssen's numerous works published before his *History of the German People*, for his description of Janssen's "works" does not fit the majority of them. This does not prevent his making hasty generalizations from what he has gathered from Lenz's admirable criticism of Janssen's *History*. And yet it is a fair question whether Janssen had not more scientific conscience than Haeckel ; at least, no one could charge Janssen with ignorance. *Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes !*

(e) To say that celibacy was introduced in the eleventh century (p. 113) is an error, often indeed committed by the non-expert ; still, it is an error which can only be explained by ignorance. The institution of celibacy is much older, but even in the fifteenth century it was still far from being enforced universally.⁴¹

(f) " The ultramontane clergy (and associated with them the orthodox ' Evangelical Alliance ') had naturally to offer a strenuous opposition to this rapid advance of the emancipated mind " (p. 114).

The fact that the " Evangelical Alliance " is here made an orthodox evangelical pendant to Ultramontanism can only be explained by ignorance of its nature and history.

(g) " Finally, six years afterwards—on July 13, 1870—the militant head of the Church crowned his folly by claiming *infallibility* for himself and all his predecessors in the Papal chair. This triumph of the Roman Curia was communicated to the astonished world five days afterwards, on the very day on which France declared war with Prussia. . . . When the Vatican Council proceeded to define the dogma of infallibility on July 13, 1870, only three-fourths of the bishops declared in its favour, 451 out of 601 assenting " (p. 115).

The vote of July 13 was a preliminary one ; and besides the 451 votes of *Placet*, there were 62 votes of *Placet juxta modum*, and only 88 votes of *Non placet*. At the decisive session 533 members of the Council voted for the proposal, and only two against it ; and this session was held *not* on the day on which France declared war, but on the day before (the declaration of war followed on July 19). Here Haeckel's error, it is true, is not one in Church history.

(h) " When we judge the long series of Popes and of the Roman

princes of the Church, from whom the Pope is chosen, by the standard of pure Christian morality,⁴² it is clear that the great majority of them were shameless deceivers and impostors."

Here a very dubious omniscience is displayed regarding things which never can be historically known—"hypocrites are less common than the superficial judgment of men is wont to suppose" (Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, iii. 758)—and an equally unjustifiable ignorance as to what is not only knowable, but has long been known, about the history of the elections to the Papal Chair in the first half of the Middle Ages. Has Haeckel never heard of the German Popes of the eleventh century, or of the Popes of the tenth and eleventh centuries, who were chosen from the Italian nobility, and before their election were not even *clergy* of the Roman Church? It was only after 1059 that it became the rule to choose the Pope from the number of the Cardinals, and the Cardinals can be described as "Princes of the Church" at the earliest after the twelfth century.

(i—l). "The dogma of the immaculate conception seems, perhaps, to be less audacious and significant than the encyclical and the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope. Yet not only the Roman hierarchy, but even some of the orthodox Protestants (e.g. the Evangelical Alliance) attach the greatest importance to this thesis. What is known as the 'Immaculate oath'—that is, the confirmation of faith by an oath taken on the immaculate conception of Mary—is still regarded by millions of Christians as a sacred obligation. Many believers take the dogma in a two-fold application; they think that the mother of Mary was impregnated by the Holy Ghost as well as Mary herself. In that case, this singular God would have stood in the most intimate relations both to mother and daughter." [This last sentence the English translator has prudently omitted.]

It is a peculiar coincidence that this offensive

paragraph is at the same time simply swarming with the stupidest blunders. Haeckel here has simply prostituted himself.

(i) To begin with, he does not even know the Romish dogma against which he is inveighing. The Papal Constitution of December 10, 1854, in which it was promulgated, declares: *pronuntiamus et definimus doctrinam, quae tenet, beatissimam virginem Mariam in primo instanti suae conceptionis fuisse singulari omnipotentis dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Jesu, salvatoris humani generis, ab omni originalis culpa labe praeservatam immunem, esse a deo revelatam atque idcirco ab omnibus fidelibus firmiter constanterque credendam*.⁴³ The Romish dogma does not in the very least deny that Mary was the natural offspring of *both* her parents. It only asserts that in the moment in which she was conceived (*conceptio passiva*) Mary was preserved by God from the contamination of original sin.⁴⁴

(k) Considering Haeckel's ignorance, it is not surprising that he should find it possible to assert that "even some of the orthodox Protestants" attach the greatest importance to the dogma promulgated by Pius IX (cf. pp. 115 and 114). This is pure nonsense; he is confusing the Romish dogma regarding the *conceptio passiva* of Mary, which it was open to any Catholic to dispute prior to 1854, with the doctrine that Jesus was "*natus de spiritu sancto et Maria virgine*," which, as based on Matthew i. and Luke ii., was affirmed even in the old Roman baptismal creed of the second century, and is maintained not only "by some of the orthodox Protestants," but by all Protestants who regard

themselves as "orthodox." That the "Evangelical Alliance" has, at some time or other, championed this ancient doctrine of the creed is possible ; I have not been able to ascertain the fact. But it is beyond question that the "Evangelical Alliance," which has repeatedly been severely attacked by confessional orthodoxy (especially at the time of the meeting of the Alliance in Berlin in 1857), has had among its members not a few Protestants who would have placed the central essence of the Evangelical faith in something quite different from the Virgin-Birth. In Ferney-Voltaire, near Geneva, there stand, almost side by side, a Catholic and a Protestant church. In front of the former stands a so-called Immaculate-pillar, in commemoration of the dogma of 1854 ; on the façade of the latter are inscribed the words, from 1 Corinthians i. 23, "But we preach Christ crucified."

(*l*) Again, even though Haeckel is here no longer thinking of "some of the orthodox Protestants," his further assertion that "*millions of Christians*" still regard "what is known as the immaculate-oath—that is, *the confirmation by an oath of faith in the immaculate conception of Mary,*" as a most sacred obligation, is sheer nonsense. The so-called "immaculate-oath" is the promise on oath *zealously to defend* with all one's powers the doctrine of the *immaculate conception* (which before it was laid down as a dogma in 1854 had been advocated for centuries by a section of Catholic theologians). The oath was first introduced by the Sorbonne (in the fifteenth century) as a vow to be taken *by its teachers* when entering upon office ; and other universities (Vienna,

Cologne and Mainz) came to adopt the Parisian usage. It seems to me unlikely that this "Immaculate oath" was ever taken save in connexion with academic life ; this, however, is not the view of Karl Hase, who says that in 1782 Joseph II abolished it for Austria, and even *for the Emperor himself*.⁴⁵ In any case, the oath has nothing to do with the great majority of the Catholic laity.

5. In the last place, I have to examine the statements which Haeckel has not been ashamed to make about the birth of Jesus (pp. 116-117). In my "Open Letter" I have already attempted to reduce them *ad absurdum* ; yet in his rejoinder Haeckel has maintained them as correct in substance. I can explain this only by supposing that Haeckel foresaw that the admission of error on this point would let all the filth he has piled together at this point descend on his own pate. But he must bear it as best he may. I have nothing to retract of all that I said in my "Open Letter," save *one* irrelevant and trifling point in *one* sentence. But I must now speak still more plainly, and I will try to state my case with all possible brevity.

According to his book (p. 116), the only trustworthy statement Haeckel could find regarding the birth of Jesus is contained in the sentence :

"Josephus Pandera, the Roman officer of a Calabrian legion which was in Judaea, seduced Miriam of Bethlehem, a Hebrew maiden, and was the father of Jesus."

In his rejoinder (p. 50) he still holds to this position.

This "historical statement" Haeckel extracted, as he tell us (p. 116), from one of the "from forty

to fifty apocryphal Gospels, as they are enumerated by the Church Fathers themselves" (a few lines lower down [p. 116] it is ascribed to "the apocryphal Gospels"), and the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua* (p. 116).

In reply to this I *hinted* in my "Open Letter," first, that the reference to the "from forty to fifty apocryphal Gospels enumerated by the Church Fathers themselves" is simply a glaring proof of Haeckel's incredible ignorance. I can now add that this seeming wisdom on his part probably rests on a very hasty perusal of the book by *Paul de Régla*,⁴⁶ with which I was already acquainted at the time of my "Open Letter." On p. 396 ff. *P. de Régla* gives "a list of the spurious Gospels of which we have some knowledge, and which are enumerated by the Church Fathers," and this list closes with No. 40. *P. de Régla's* list does not compel us to assume his ignorance of the fact that of the Church Fathers one names certain Gospels, and another certain others; nor is he unaware of the fact that several of his numbers are identical ($8=32$; $18=30$; $21=22$; $33=39$). His list, too, is full of fatuities, as it happens; we actually find figuring in it, e.g., the *Evangelium aeternum*, i.e. a name for the three apocalyptic writings of Joachim of Floris (died 1202). *De Régla's* erudition, however, has had to wait for Haeckel's pen to become *nonsense of the really rank order*.

Secondly, I insisted on the fact that *no* apocryphal Gospel contains the Panthera story; at the same time showing how one of them, the so-called Gospel of Nicodemus, dating from the fourth century—hardly from the second, as Tischendorf thought—

betrays a knowledge of the Jewish slander that Jesus was "begotten in sin," a phrase apparently meant to indicate the illegitimate (ante-nuptial ?) begetting of Jesus by Joseph.

Consequently, there was nothing for it—and this was the third point I made—but to assume that Haeckel had taken his filthy story (indirectly) from the book whose name he gives, the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua*, or, more accurately, the *Sepher Tol'doth Jeschu*.⁴⁸ The sentence quoted by Haeckel, indeed, is not to be found word for word in any of the recensions of the book known to me. In Wagenseil's recension it is related that Miriam, a Hebrew virgin from Bethlehem, a dresser of women's hair, and the betrothed of a certain Jochanan, was seduced . . . by Joseph Pandira, a brave but dissolute soldier of the tribe of Judah, and thus became the mother of Jesus.⁴⁹ According to Joh. Jac. Huldreich's recension, Miriam, the hair-curler, was wedded to a certain Papus, but on the occasion of the Feast of Reconciliation she fled from her husband with Josephus Pandira of Nazareth, and became by him the mother of Jesus and of other sons and daughters. In the Jewish-German version, edited by Dr. Bischoff (Leipzig, 1895), the story resembles that of Wagenseil's recension, except that Pandira is described only as a "lewd fellow," and as the son of a carpenter. Still, at the time of my "Open Letter" I was convinced that this story from the *Tol'doth Jeschu* was the filthy source on which Haeckel had relied.

And this I maintain still. But there is one point I must correct. I acted imprudently—this I will-

ingly concede to Dr. Bischoff—in simply accepting for the *Sepher Tol'doth Jeschu* the date (“13th century at earliest”) given in the books accessible to me, although I neither had nor have any means of verifying it.⁵⁰ But my “triumphant confidence” did not rest at all upon the correctness of this date, as Dr. Bischoff might quite well have seen.⁵¹ If Dr. Bischoff is right in his opinion that versions of the *Tol'doth Jeschu* which we still possess go back to the eleventh century—and on this point I trust his unquestionable knowledge of the subject—what difference does it make? I might, like Dr. Bischoff, have simply given “the Middle Ages”—as I did seven lines lower down—as the date of the *Sepher Tol'doth Jeschu*. My readers would then have had the time from about 600 A.D. onwards to choose from, and yet the impression which my sentence left would have been the same. I have never sought to conceal the fact that these stories go back to a much older original. I myself called Haeckel's attention to the passage in Celsus, of which he was unaware, and, referring to a treatise which discusses the connexion between this passage and a number of passages in the Talmud, declared my adhesion to the hypothesis that Celsus “is reproducing what he had heard from Jews of his own day.” But in Haeckel it is not the original form with which we have to do. He cites, within quotation marks, a form of the story which, compared with the edited texts of the *Tol'doth*, is secondary, for in it “Pandera” has become an “officer in a Calabrian legion.” I am profoundly indebted to Dr. Bischoff for having informed me, in his note to Haeckel's

rejoinder (p. 54 f.), that this *Tol'doth* story still exists as a living tradition among the Jews. For in that case the recension used by Haeckel's obscure authority—who is not Saladin—must belong to a period much *later* than the thirteenth century.

In any case, it does not belong to "the first century." And that brings me to Haeckel's rejoinder.

There Haeckel has given up "the apocryphal Gospels" as source of the Panthera story, and brought in Celsus instead. This undoubted improvement in his position he owes to me. He ought to have said—and it would have been more honourable to say—that I had pointed out to him the better way. Or was he afraid that such a confession would expose him to charges like those he hurls against Ultramontane histories when he speaks of "the deceits of audacious falsifications"? I do not so lightly call in question a man's *bona fides*, and therefore I do not charge Professor Haeckel with "deceit" or "audacious falsifications." But I do say that in adducing "the apocryphal Gospels"—placed by him on the same level as the canonical Gospels as regards date and credibility—as authority for the Panthera story, while he knew nothing of Celsus, *he has exhibited an amount of ignorance which a healthy scientific conscience would have felt called for silence rather than for dogmatical expressions of opinion.*

Alongside of Celsus Haeckel now names, as positive sources, "contemporary and earlier passages in the Talmud, especially the first century book *Sepher Toldoth* (not *S. T. Jeschua*).¹" The latter correc-

tion he owes to Dr. Bischoff. In his note (p. 53) Dr. Bischoff called attention to a passage from the Mishna of the Talmud ("Jebamoth, iv. 13 Bl. 49a") cited by Laible (*Jesus Christus im Talmud*, Berlin, 1891, p. 31), in which even Laible thinks Jesus is reproached with adulterous birth. In the passage in question, according to Laible, a certain Rabbi Simeon ben Azzai, belonging to the younger generation of the Tannaim (90-130 A.D.), says:

"I found in Jerusalem a book of genealogies, in which was written: This N.N. is the bastard of a married woman."

In his explanatory remarks on this passage (p. 32)—used by Dr. Bischoff also in his learned annotations on p. 53—Laible has sought to prove that by the N.N. who is mentioned, none but Jesus can be meant. Dr. Bischoff accepted this suggestion (just as in the first impression of this pamphlet I accepted it). Then, inserting in place of "a book of genealogies" the Hebrew word equivalent in meaning, he rendered the passage as follows:

"I found in Jerusalem a *Sepher Tholdoth*, in which was written: This man (= Jesus) is the bastard of a married woman."

Now this "saved" Haeckel, at least to some extent. For to every one who knows nothing of Hebrew and does not look closely, this fine passage from the Talmud would seem to cover Haeckel's nakedness. Haeckel had merely confused the *Sepher Tol'doth* with the *Sepher Tol'doth Jeschu*: this he had corrected; his honour as a man of science was retrieved.

But even if the passage read as Dr. Bischoff renders it, and actually referred to Jesus, still this attempt to save Haeckel would fail.

A *Sepher Tol'doth*, as Dr. Bischoff does not conceal, is nothing more than "a register of births," "a book of genealogies." Thus, if a Rabbi, wishing to slander Jesus as a bastard, had appealed to a *Sepher Tol'doth*, his action would have been almost exactly the same as that of a modern slanderer who, in a similar case, claimed to have examined the registrar's books; and no one would ever dream of imagining that a *book*, resembling the later *Sepher Tol'doth Jeschu*, was meant. Dr. Bischoff himself imagined nothing of the kind. And therefore it filled me with amazement to learn that Dr. Bischoff, "after interchanging letters with Professor Haeckel, had come to the conclusion" that Haeckel—who never mentions the Talmud in the pages of his book that deal with this subject!—"had had this Talmudic '*Sepher Tholdoth*' in his mind when he wrote the ambiguous words that the *Sepher Tholdoth Jeschua* confirmed the statement of an apocryphal Gospel regarding Jesus' birth, and that 'this historian' relates that the centurion Josephus Pandera had seduced Miriam," etc. (p. 53).

To me this "conclusion" was simply astounding, considering that in the passage from the Talmud, as in the parallel passage from the Gospel of Nicodemus, there is not a word about Pandera; while in his rejoinder Haeckel still clings obstinately to his "Calabrian officer Josephus Pandera." Whence comes this Calabrian officer? Haeckel now derives him—in his rejoinder—from Celsus. But Celsus mentions neither the personal name, "Joseph," nor his officer's rank, nor Calabria! Besides, at the time when Professor Haeckel wrote

his book, Celsus was quite unknown to him, nor has he even yet thought him worth a single glance. If, when he quoted in his book the "historical statement" regarding the Calabrian officer, Josephus Pandera, Haeckel had in his mind the passage from the Talmud which Dr. Bischoff has adduced, then—well, then he spun the rest of the story out of his own head, and, marvellous to relate, his story is exactly identical with that which is found in the *Tol'doth Jeschu* books. But we cannot credit Haeckel with such inventiveness. He must unquestionably have taken his "historical statement," which was in quotation marks, word for word from somewhere. And that his source was not "the Talmudic *Sepher Tholdoth*" book, but—of course in some indirect way—a recension of the mediaeval *Tol'doth Jeschu*, should now be pretty clear to every reader of these lines.

At the time when I published the first edition of this pamphlet Dr. Bischoff's "conclusion" to the contrary was utterly incomprehensible to me. Even at that time, too, I remarked that Dr. Bischoff was certainly truthful in saying that he had come to his conclusion not "after a letter from Professor Haeckel," but "after an *interchange* of letters with Professor Haeckel."

Since then the whole of this fine structure, built up by Dr. Bischoff and Haeckel, has collapsed in utter ruins. A mistaken confidence in Dr. Bischoff's Talmudic learning prevented me from discovering for myself that the structure rested on an absolutely hollow foundation. When preparing the first edition of this pamphlet, I had not looked up the

passage in the Talmud of which Laible and Bischoff made use. I am indebted to Herr Lazarus Goldschmidt, of Charlottenburg (to whom I had sent a copy of this little book by way of thanks for friendly information), for pointing out that Haeckel's self-defence and Bischoff's attempt to save him are even more baseless than I could ever have dreamed. With the help of Herr Goldschmidt's information, and aided by the advice of my honoured friend and colleague, Dr. Kautzsch, I can now clear away all the obscurity which clung about this passage in previous editions owing to my not having traced the subject scientifically right up to its original source.

In the first place, it is beyond question that the passage cited from the Mischna (Tract. *J'bamoth*, 4, 15, al. 13), says not a word about a *Sepher Tol'doth*; what Laible translates "Book of Genealogies" is in Hebrew *M'gillat joch^asin*.⁵²

Further, it is at least extremely *probable* that this Mischna passage contains absolutely no reference to Jesus. I say no more than "*extremely probable*," for personally I can pass no *certain* opinion on the point; still, I may remark that Herr Lazarus Goldschmidt, who is a Jew and knows his Talmud, regards it as quite certain. The passage deals merely with the idea of a "Mamser," i.e. of a bastard who, according to Deuteronomy xxiii. 2, must be cast out of the congregation. Literally translated, the whole section runs as follows: ⁵³

"If any man takes again his divorced wife, or one who has performed the *chaliza* to him [i.e. the drawing off of the shoe enjoined in Deut. xxv. 9], or marries her near relative afterwards,

he must separate from her, and the child is a *mamser*. So Rabbi Akiba. The [other] Rabbis say: the child is not a *mamser*. But they agree that if a man has married the next-of-kin of his divorced wife, the child is a *mamser*. What is a *mamser*? Every child born within the degrees of kinship in which marriage is forbidden. So Rabbi Akiba. Simeon the Temanite says: only a child born within those forbidden degrees of kinship, the transgression of which entails the punishment of extermination. And his view is the legal tradition. Rabbi Joshua says: only a child born of those marriages of which death is the just desert. In confirmation of the opinion of Rabbi Joshua, Rabbi Simeon ben Azzai relates: I found a register of births in Jerusalem in which was written, 'so and so [N.N.] is the *mamser* of a married woman.' " 54

Who the N.N. is, is a matter of utter indifference for Rabbi Simeon's reasoning; all he is concerned with is the fact that in the *m'gillat joch'sin* of Jerusalem he found this N.N., who was begotten in adultery, described as a *mamser*. There is not the slightest suggestion that Jesus is meant.

Now what is the history of Dr. Bischoff's plea and Haeckel's self-defence? In spite of the lofty claims to the rank of Talmudic expert which he makes in his note, Dr. Bischoff *has not looked up the Talmud* when attempting to "save" Haeckel. He has really taken the quotation from the tract *J'bamoth* out of Laible (or extracts from Laible), has translated Laible's *Book of Genealogies* back into Hebrew (wrongly), and then "by an interchange of letters with Professor Haeckel, come to the conclusion that Haeckel had in his mind this Talmudic *Sepher Tol'doth*"—a book which simply does not exist. And Haeckel has evidently arrived at the same conclusion, for in his explanation he says that the statement of Celsus is supported

"by contemporary and earlier statements of the Talmud, and especially by the *Sepher Toldoth*, which belongs to the first century."

I shall pass no moral judgment on such proceedings. Not on Dr. Bischoff, for he has partially explained to me his inexcusable haste, and has expressed regret for his procedure. Not on Professor Haeckel, for I have to do not with Haeckel the man, but with Haeckel the scholar. Haeckel the scholar could hardly have exposed himself more ignominiously than he has done. It has now been *proved* to him that in writing his book he had never a thought of "the Talmudic *Sepher Tol'doth*." His authority—indirectly—was the mediaeval *Sepher-Tol'doth-Jeschu*.

But now if the "historical statement" about Jesus' birth, which Haeckel regards as the only trustworthy one, is derived from the *Tol'doth-Jeschu* book, the ridicule I cast in my "Open Letter" on this wonderful scientific feat was justified. Aye, and more than ridicule is justified, *if* the Jewish assertions about Jesus' birth (to be found in the Talmud, in the Gospel of Nicodemus, and in Celsus in their older forms, and in the *Sepher-Tol'doth-Jeschu* in a more developed shape), are nothing more nor less than "Jewish calumnies." Haeckel thinks it "scarcely a scientific method of refutation summarily to reject this, which is the only positive statement we have, as a Jewish calumny." I must therefore say a few words more on this point.

I thought I could dispose of the matter thus briefly because scientific scholars are at one on the subject. Even David Friedrich Strauss, "the

greatest theologian of the nineteenth century" (*Riddle, etc.*, p. 109), of whom Haeckel himself says (p. 110) that he has expounded far better than he himself could do the principal points of difference between "the old and the new faith"—even Strauss at the outset of an essay (published four years *after* his *Leben Jesu*) "On the names Panther, Pantheras, Pandera, in Jewish and patristic narratives of Jesus' origin," says: ⁵⁵

"The question how slander-mongering Jews can have hit upon the idea of giving just the name above described to the man whom, according to the well-known fiction, they made the natural father of Jesus, and how some of the Church Fathers also came to insert the same name (of which the Gospels know nothing) in the legitimate genealogy of Jesus, seems at first thought to be an extremely unimportant matter—as regards the former because the Jewish slander, which collapsed of its own hollowness long ago, now needs no refutation; as regards the latter, because our faith in Christ rests upon better grounds than those of genealogy" (p. 15).

This consensus of expert scholars—with whom even Dr. Bischoff, in his note, could not but express his agreement (p. 54)—really settles the point. Still, for Haeckel's information, I will briefly subjoin the reasons for this unanimity.

We have in literature a three-fold tradition regarding Jesus' birth:

1. The statement that Jesus was Joseph's son. So the early Jewish Christians believed, at least in part (cf. *supra*, p. 20); so apparently also the genealogies in the original form (cf. *supra*, p. 20 and note 25); so said the Jews, according to the Gospel of Luke ⁵⁶ (which itself relates the Virgin-Birth); so also the first disciples as well as the Jews in the

Gospel of John⁵⁷ (in which Gospel the Virgin-Birth is not mentioned).

2. The narrative of the Virgin-Birth in Matthew i. and Luke ii.

3. The Jewish "accounts"—given now in this form, now in that, at first vague, but later detailed—which assign to Jesus a dishonourable origin.

The first-named tradition is the earliest and most natural; the second belongs to the latest strata of Biblical tradition, and its presence in the New Testament can be proved only in the passages cited; the third is evidently still later,⁵⁸ and besides, is self-condemned by the multiplicity of its forms.⁵⁹

Under these circumstances, and as nothing stands in the way,⁶⁰ historical criticism can only decide for the first tradition,⁶¹ and regard the accounts mentioned in the third place as simply Jewish calumnies.

In judging otherwise Haeckel has not only given abundant proofs of his ignorance; he has also *associated himself with those filthy Jewish slander-mongers* whom all Jews of good education and position unite with Christians to condemn.⁶²

V

THE TONE OF HAECKEL'S XVIITH CHAPTER

THIS brings me to the last point with which I have to deal.

Ignorance is no crime. It only becomes wrong when it presumes to judge where it is incompetent to judge. And when it states its baseless judgments in a form which would merit severe censure even if its grounds were good, it becomes *despicable*. *This is the position of Professor Haeckel*. A few passages in proof will suffice.

In continuation of the story, cited in my "Open Letter" [and reproduced freely by Haeckel from Saladin, p. 172], regarding the selection of the canonical Gospels at the Synod of Nicaea, Haeckel writes (p. 111):

"If any modern 'unbeliever' finds this story of the 'leap of the sacred books' incredible, we must remind him that it is just as credible as the table-turning and spirit-rapping that are believed to take place to-day by millions of educated people; and that hundreds of millions of Christians believe just as implicitly in their personal immortality, their 'resurrection from the dead,' and the Trinity of God—dogmas that contradict pure reason no more and no less than that miraculous bound of the Gospel manuscripts."

This is not the language of science! A writer of scientific dignity and really fine culture would at least have remembered that, among others, the great philosopher, Immanuel Kant (from whom

Haeckel borrows here the idea of "pure reason"—or at least the terminology), was a devoted champion of the belief in immortality, and, recalling Hegel (to mention no more), would have spoken otherwise of the dogma of the Trinity. The man who places these beliefs on the same level as the acceptance of a legend which Saladin's ignorance had represented as good tradition, or as the superstition of table-turning, uses the language, not of science, but of "Hyde Park" philosophy *à la* Colonel Ingersoll, with its "advanced," but uneducated, thought, and its stock-in-trade of pointless wit.

A second example. On p. 116, immediately after retailing the *Panthera* story, Haeckel says :

"Naturally these historical details are carefully avoided by the official theologian, because they assort badly with the traditional myth, and lift the veil from its mystery in a very simple and natural fashion."

In substance nothing could be less scientific. For the *Panthera* story has been seriously investigated by a whole series of "official theologians."⁶³ And *in form* it is an abominable insinuation. To fling about utterly groundless personal insinuations is not the proper method of scientific discussion. *Haeckel's language is simply that of a fanatical and unscrupulous agitator.*

Lastly, let me quote four consecutive instances of the disgusting character of the language in which Haeckel has indulged in Chapter xvii. of his book :

P. 375 (Germ. original). "Accordingly this singular God must have stood in the most intimate relations both to mother and daughter ; he must indeed have been his own father-in-law" (Saladin). [This sentence, as noted above (p. 38), has been omitted by the English translator.]

P. 377 (Germ.). "More in detail Luke narrates (chap. i. 26-38) the 'Annunciation to Mary' by the Archangel⁶⁴ Gabriel in the words, 'the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee,' to which Mary answers, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' It is well known that this visit of the Angel Gabriel and his Annunciation has been chosen by many famous painters as the subject of interesting pictures. On this Svoboda⁶⁵ says, 'The archangel speaks here with a frankness which painting happily could not reproduce. In this case too we have prosaic Biblical materials ennobled by constructive art. It is true there have been painters whose representations showed that they quite understood the archangel's embryological observations.' " [Also omitted from the English translation.]

"Whenever a king's unwedded daughter, or some other maid of high degree, gave birth to a child, the father was always pronounced to be a god, or a demi-god; in the Christian case it was the mysterious 'Holy Ghost' " (p. 116).

"Other details given about Miriam (the Hebrew name for Mary)—[given i.e. by the chronicler, who curtly narrates 'the remarkable story of Josephus Pandera'] are far from being to the credit of the 'Queen of Heaven' " (p. 116).

The first quotation I have not found in Saladin, but it certainly has the genuine "odour." In the second quotation also Haeckel is reproducing the words of another. But the last two quotations and several statements of a similar nature from pp. 115-117 show that he has been a ready scholar. This is not the language of science! *It is the language of a reporter for the yellow press, who seasons his copy with the piquant spice of lubricity.*

VI

CONCLUSION

WITH this I have done. Any one who has read these pages with intelligent interest will admit, I think, that at no point have I either disputed with Professor Haeckel regarding *the personal convictions of Christian faith*, or made such convictions the basis of my argument. From my heart I say with the Apostles, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ" (Rom. i. 16); and for me, too, this Gospel of Christ means "the foolishness of preaching" which has the crucified and risen Saviour for its theme (cf. 1 Cor. i. 21). But it was my sacred duty to confine myself in the foregoing pages to things with which my Christian faith has nothing to do. I was quite well aware, before ever Haeckel wrote his book, that my "standpoint" in regard to the Riddle of the Universe was different from his. But out of respect for a brother professor I did not as yet consider it my duty, in my "Open Letter," to assert plainly that Haeckel likewise occupies a different *scientific* standpoint from me—viz., that on the question, what constitutes the work, the method, and the conscience of a true man of science he had other views than I, whose standpoint, I make bold to claim, is simply that of the universal tradition of scholars. Now, however, I believe

myself not only to have asserted, but to have proved, that in the chapter of his book which I have examined, Professor Haeckel, by *his use of the most shamelessly vile literature*, by his dogmatical judgments, coupled with *the most disgraceful ignorance*, and by a tone which is utterly discreditable in scientific discussion or anywhere else, has shown that *he does not possess "a healthy scientific conscience."*

I intentionally refrain from any remarks whatsoever on the worth of Haeckel's book for natural science, a subject on which I am not competent to judge. What is to be thought of its philosophical value, a matter on which I can better form an opinion, has lately been shown by another writer.⁶⁷ But I need not allude at all to these aspects of the case. The 17th chapter of his book, *taken by itself*, is enough to prove that Professor Haeckel is destitute of the *knowledge*, the *feeling*, and the *conscience* needful for the discussion of the highest questions which have stirred the mind of man.

These are hard words. Indeed, all I have said has been "insulting" to Professor Haeckel—in the sense explained on p. 5 and p. 22, and *it is meant* to be so. I have written thus strongly, and, in addition, italicized the insulting words, in order that Professor Haeckel may not suppose that he can back out of this affair under cover of a new rejoinder, full of fine words about theological and "scientific" views of the world. What I have been attacking is not Professor Haeckel's "standpoint," not his "view of the world," but *his honour as a man of science*; and I have attacked it so strongly that

any court of law would certainly award my colleague of Jena heavy damages against me, had I not at the same time brought proof positive of my assertions.

I do not refer to courts of law in order to drag a scientific controversy before the judges of the land.⁸⁷ I should be very glad if Professor Haeckel were to attempt a scientific self-defence ; for that also I should be under the necessity of demolishing, and the task I should not decline. But I should not be displeased if Professor Haeckel were to raise an action against me, for then the daily press would have to take cognizance of the matter, while, as things are at present, I fear that many newspapers, even of those to which copies are sent for review, will take refuge in silence (cf. above, p. 29). Still, let me emphasize the fact—I do not refer to courts of law, nor have I written so strongly, in order to provoke an action for libel. I have already pointed out that I can only claim the protection of § 193 of the Criminal Code as against § 185,⁸⁸ by proving the truth of the charges I have made. This surely will be sufficient to show Professor Haeckel and my readers that I have run the risks deliberately. I should have thought myself a coward had I rested content with such expressions of criticism as would have been permissible even though I had been in the wrong as to the facts.

On this view no fair-minded reader will resent the tone of my criticism. Only by assuming that tone have I gained the right to say : If Professor Haeckel has no choice but to bear my invective silently, by that very fact he passes sentence on himself as “ a man of science,” at least so far as his *Riddle of the Universe* is concerned.

APPENDIX I

THE AUTHOR'S OPEN LETTER TO PROFESSOR HAECKEL,

PUBLISHED IN THE *Christliche Welt* OF NOV. 9, 1899.

HALLE, a/S.,
25 October, 1899.

HONOURED COLLEAGUE,

This mode of address, used towards you by an "official" representative of Christian Theology, does not sound like a *captatio benevolentiae*. On the contrary, it cannot but remind you painfully of the fact that the representatives of scientific theology at our Universities are still officially regarded as equally representative of "Science" with jurists, medical men, philosophers, or even naturalists themselves. And yet it is as a *captatio benevolentiae* that it is meant. Though your wishes, if realized, would speedily eliminate the "relics of the Middle Ages" still to be found in our University arrangements, yet I hope that as a matter of social courtesy you will not decline to recognize the relations which actually exist. Accordingly, I count on your giving a hearing even to a theological "colleague," who ventures to interrogate you in the interests of "objective truth."

The request has been addressed to me, and that—

do not be horrified!—by a non-theological colleague, that I should publicly refute certain monstrous assertions in regard to the history of Christianity made by you in your latest book (*The Riddle of the Universe: Popular Studies in Monistic Philosophy*, Bonn, 1899). Now I am quite well aware that in general it is better not to take the errors of a dilettante too seriously. But this is the wisest policy only when it is on a *corpus vile* that the dilettante's feats have been performed, and when the reputation of the writer who has fallen into such errors is not great enough to lead his readers into the danger of supposing it impossible for him to be guilty of gross ignorance. It is for this reason that I cannot decline the request to deal with your book. And yet how can I comply with it? If I were to write a critical article on what you have said about "Science and Christianity" in your xvii. chapter, I fear my pen would run away with me, and who can tell to what lengths it might go against my will! The method of reply I have adopted, viz., an "Open Letter," will keep me in mind of the obligations of courtesy against which I must not offend. The respectful consideration usually shown to a brother Professor you yourself will desire as little as you have extended it to others, but I trust that you will gratefully recognize that I have duly considered the interests of the freedom of scientific thought.

It is far from my intention here to take up, in their entirety, the vast number of scientifically baseless assertions you have made in the chapter referred to. Still less do I think of touching on the comments with which your assertions are accompanied; as for

many of them, I pity the readers to whom they give pleasure. I will only select two specially important particulars, as to which you will, I hope, be obliged to confess that you have been the victim of deplorable credulity, and that the authorities you have trusted would justly receive the prize for malignity and ignorance. On p. 360 (Eng. Tr. p. 110) you say :

“ As to the four canonical Gospels, we now know that they were selected from a host of contradictory and forged manuscripts of the first three centuries by the 318 bishops who assembled at the Council of Nicaea in 327. The entire list of Gospels numbered forty ; the canonical list contains four. As the contending and mutually abusive bishops could not agree about the choice they determined (according to the *Synodicon* of Pappus) to leave the selection to a miracle. They put all the books together underneath the altar, and prayed that the apocryphal books, of human origin, might remain there, and the genuine, inspired books might be miraculously placed on the table of the Lord. And that, says tradition, really occurred. The three synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke—all written *after* them, not *by* them, at the beginning of the second century) and the very different fourth Gospel (ostensibly ‘ after ’ John, written about the middle of the second century) leaped on the table, and were thenceforth recognized as the inspired (with their thousand mutual contradictions) foundations of Christian doctrine ” (compare Saladin).

I have not “ compared ” the work of Saladin (Stewart Ross), *Jehovas gesammelte Werke. Eine kritische Untersuchung des jüdisch-christlichen Religionsgebäudes auf Grund der Bibelforschung. Zürich (Leipzig, Fleischer), 1896.* [Compare for the title of the English original, *supra*, p. 6. Translator.] Our University Library has not considered it necessary to procure the book, and you could not expect that for the sake of this letter I should have to buy it as well as *de Régla* (see below).

For one reason, however, I *do* regret my lack of acquaintance with his work, for I cannot make out whether the date you give for the Council of Nicaea is to be attributed to the ignorance of Mr. Stewart Ross or to an unlucky misprint. Following the old rule *In dubio mitius*, I will suppose that your MS. contained the date 325, as given in every school-book. I may presume that your authority is really responsible for the rest. Still, as in your preface, you emphasize your own "honourable and conscientious work," you ought not to take it amiss if I address to you in person my polemic against the authority you have followed.

You cite "the *Synodicon* of Pappus." Was Pappus a Church Father? I do not know him. We possess a *Synodicon*, which gives some brief information about the Synods up to the time (inclusive) of Photius (877). Can you have used a work like this, which hardly plays any part in the history of the Synods, as a source for the Nicene Council of 325? I should not believe it, out of respect for your sense for critical history, were it not that the first *editor* of the *Synodicon* was a Strasburg theologian, Johannes Pappus (1601), and that this *Synodicon* does contain a story which reminds one of the narrative you have given us. After mentioning the decisions of the Nicene Council against Arius and Sabellius, the *Synodicon* relates (c. 34, ed. *Fabrizius-Harles, Bibl. graeca, xii. 371*):

"It [i.e. the Synod] distinguished between the writings belonging to the [New] Testament, and those which are apocryphal, in the following way. Being assembled in the house of God, they laid them on the floor at the Holy Table [the Altar] and

prayed, entreating the Lord that the inspired writings might be found upon it [viz. the Table], but the spurious beneath it. And so it happened."

You see, there is not a word here about the Gospels. The number of the Gospels, as four, was regarded by Irenaeus of Lyons, so early as 185, as just as fixed as the four quarters of heaven (Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.* 3, 11, 8, *ed. Massuet*), and his somewhat later contemporaries Tertullian in Africa and Clement of Alexandria give expression to similar views. In Syria alone, instead of the "Gospel of the separate writers" there was in official use until within the fourth century a Gospel Harmony, the *Diatessaron* of Tatian. But the very name of the *Diatessaron*, which came into existence about 180, in itself points back to the four Gospels. The statement you have made, on the supposed authority of the *Synodicon*, therefore, is not only destitute of foundation in the original source, but is in itself absolutely incredible. And it is no better with what the *Synodicon* really says. We have good contemporary records for the history of the fourth century, and we are nowhere told in them that the Nicene Council took to do with the fixing of the Canon. A remark in Jerome (*praef. in Judith*, *ed. Migne*, x. 39), which possibly might be interpreted in this sense, really says something quite different. The account which the *Synodicon* gives therefore—quite apart from the absurd *modus procedendi*—is incredible; and its story of how the apocryphal books were weeded out, while edifying to a *later* day, only confirms the legendary character of the narrative. If you should feel surprise that the late author of the *Synodicon*

should offer us a story which has no foundation in real fact, you may solve the puzzle by comparing your own account with that of the *Synodicon*. If, in the enlightened nineteenth century, a professor of natural science, in consequence of his uncritical dependence on unknown intermediaries, could find a narrative expanding in his hands in so interesting a fashion, is it so very surprising that similar human frailties should have overtaken a less educated person in the ninth century?

Your statements regarding the apocryphal Gospels have acted only as a rotten spring-board, to land you in a second, and far more monstrous, assertion.* On p. 379 (E. T. 116) you write—as I have said, I refrain from touching on the unedifying comments with which you accompany your assertion:—

“As we have already related, the four canonical gospels which are regarded as the only genuine ones by the Christian Church, and adopted as the foundation of faith, were deliberately chosen from a much larger number of Gospels, the details of which contradict each other sometimes just as freely as the legends of the other four. The fathers of the Church enumerate from forty to fifty of these spurious or apocryphal gospels; some of them are written both in Greek and Latin—for instance, the Gospel of James, of Thomas, of Nicodemus, and so forth. The details which these apocryphal gospels give of the life of Christ, especially with regard to his birth and childhood, have just as much (or, on the whole, just as little) claim to historical validity as the four canonical gospels, so-called ‘genuine.’ Now, we find in one of these apocryphal gospels an historical statement, confirmed, moreover, in the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua*, which probably furnishes the simple and natural solution of the ‘world-

* At this point Professor Loofs' letter enters on discussions which we are most reluctant to lay upon the table of the Christian family. For the fact that we are compelled to do so, Professor Haeckel must be held responsible. [Editor, *Christliche Welt*.]

riddle' of the supernatural conception and birth of Christ. The author curtly gives us in one sentence the remarkable tale which contains this solution: 'Josephus Pandera, the Roman officer of a Calabrian legion which was in Judaea, seduced Miriam of Bethlehem, and became the father of Jesus.' "

As to this paragraph, I will not pause to comment on the "from forty to fifty gospels enumerated by the Church Fathers," though it is amusing to observe how modern "enumerations," which add together the scattered notices of early writers, are promoted to be "enumerations by the Church Fathers." To me the point of main importance is what you say about the birth of Jesus. I surmised that your authority was the book you had used, written by Paul de Régla (Dr. P. A. Desjardin), *Jesus von Nazareth vom wissenschaftlichen, geschichtlichen, und gesellschaftlichen Standpunkt. Aus dem Französischen. Leipzig, 1894. [Jesus of Nazareth, from the scientific, historical, and social point of view]*. For I knew from a review that this French surgeon, who hails in Jesus a brother-expert in magnetic therapeutics, also regards Him as "the child of a secret amour," "or the offspring of an act which modern society declares a crime" (p. 47). But the only result of the five shillings I wasted on the book was to assure me that de Régla cannot be made your excuse. I feel no inclination to pursue any further "studies in sources" in order to trace the origin of your discoveries. Nor is it necessary. You will admit that every true scholar must accept responsibility for his assertions, even when he makes use of other people's results. And therefore I address myself directly to yourself.

In what "apocryphal Gospel," honoured colleague,

have you found the "historical statement" on which you place so high a value? Up to the present moment there is no apocryphal Gospel known which contains any such statement. If you have discovered it in the course of your profound researches, pray do not withhold it from the scientific world! Make it public, and then the "official theologians" will not fail to devote their special attention to "these historical details," regarding which, it cannot be denied, they have hitherto preserved a "most careful silence" (Haeckel, E.T. p. 116). Or can it be that your "honourable and conscientious work" really consisted in your uncritically accepting the statements of some ignoramus whose name I cannot discover? However much to be deplored, this last supposition is unavoidable. For on p. 379 (E. T. p. 116) you describe the "Panthera story" as being given by "the apocryphal *Gospels*," and therefore the first supposition is impossible, for "the apocryphal *Gospels*," the majority of which at least we know, simply do not contain the story in question. It is very disappointing to find so eminent a scholar convicted of such a lack of independence, though there is no denying that this dependence on others of itself goes far to expiate, because to excuse, his fault.

In the light of what has just been proved, I refrain in what follows from challenging *you* to justify your assertions. But I must prove still more convincingly *my* assertion that your authority, or the writer from whom he has copied, is as malicious as he is ignorant. Here is the proof.

In "one of the apocryphal *Gospels*," the so-called

Gospel of Nicodemus, it is stated that the Jews, before Pilate's judgment-seat, made the charge against Jesus that He was the child of sin ("Thou wast begotten in sin," cap. 2, Tischendorf, *Evang. apocr.* ed. alt. p. 291). This Gospel, I may remark in passing, presupposes the Gospel of John, and dates in Tischendorf's opinion from the second, but in the opinion of Lipsius from the fourth century. According to its accounts then, the charge made against Jesus, a charge which would apparently point to an illegitimate connexion between Joseph and Mary, and which we do not find proved in the context, was refuted by other Jews present. Still, we have here a passage in "an apocryphal Gospel" in which the idea that Jesus' birth was dishonourable can be found, even though enclosed in the husk of an apologetic narrative. Consequently, however little resemblance this passage has to the "Panthera story," we must suppose that it is the basis of your authority's fabulous statements about the "Panthera story" being found in an "apocryphal Gospel." If this be so, it is clear that the malignity of your authority is as great as his unprincipled carelessness. Or should we accept for him too the excuse which may be admitted in your case, that he was speaking of things of which he knew nothing, and of which he had only gathered a distorted impression through uncertain media of tradition? It may be so. In that case he will only have to bear the reproach of having come forward with such arrogant assurance that he succeeded in ensnaring even a university professor in his error. The initial source of the villainy will then be his literary father or

grandfather, or—since the lines of literary descent, too, are sometimes very long—some ancestor still more remote.

Whoever the true culprit may have been, in any case he was an evil-minded man and a Jew to the backbone. This will be somewhat depressing to your Aryan self-consciousness : for on p. 379 (E. T. p. 116) you avow your conviction that the Semitic race is inferior to the Aryan. But we have no choice but to accept the fact. You tell us—and what has just been said proves that this further assertion must have been derived either from your authority, or from that literary ancestor who is really to blame—that the “ historical statement ” about Panthera is “ confirmed ” by the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua*. As a matter of fact this book does contain at full length the story you tell, though not in the same words (Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judentum*, 1700 I, 105 f.). But what is this *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua* ? Last century Voltaire gave a glaring indication of his blind hatred against the Church of the Jesuits by representing this book as older than the Gospels. It has, however, long since been proved that the *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua* (“ the Book of the Origins of Jesus ”) is a Jewish lampoon of the *thirteenth* century ; and at the present day none but a stubborn, narrow-minded Jew could reject the conclusion. Thus the opinion that a book like this could “ confirm ” our knowledge of an event in the first century can be held only by one who regards all other nations as inferior to the Semitic—in other words by one who is a Jew to the backbone.

You will be horrified to think that you have been misled into citing a book which belongs to the Middle

Ages as an authority for the first century. To calm your dismay, I will add one detail, of which your authority was ignorant—presupposing that your failure to mention it was not an oversight. The story of “Pandera,” or, more accurately, “Pantheras,” is really older. It is to be found, in a simpler form, in the oldest heathen assailant of Christianity, Celsus the Platonist (*circa* 180), known to us from Origen’s reply. In his book against Celsus, i. 32, Origen says :

“But we will come back to what Celsus makes the Jews say. It is that the mother of Jesus was divorced by the carpenter who had married her, because she was convicted of adultery, and had borne a child to a certain soldier named Pantheras.”

We are not to suppose that Celsus made this up out of his own head. Even the “official theology” (which has all along been investigating the origin of these fabrications, cf. G. Rösch, *Die Jesusmythen des Judenthums* in the *Studien und Kritiken*, 1873, pp. 77–115) assumes that Celsus is here reproducing what he had heard from Jews of his own day. Thus the outcome of your “honourable and conscientious work,” though you never dreamt of it, really goes back to Jewish slanders of the second century.

It will be admitted by all who know anything of the methods of historical research, that Jewish slanders of the second century, which presuppose Matt. i. and Luke ii., cannot be trustworthy sources. I know that historical research is not at all in your line ; you always speak of nature alone, without mentioning history, as the source of valid knowledge. Still, I have sufficient confidence in a scholar’s ability to put himself into sympathy with an unfamiliar

subject as to believe that you will now admit the rights of scientific criticism in this matter. The question between us is not that of the historicity of Luke ii. and Matt. i. ; this I would expressly emphasize. If you are interested to know my views on that point I beg you to turn up and read the *Real-Encyclopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, 3 Aufl. Bd. iv. p. 19. The question between us is rather whether a healthy scientific conscience can allow the historicity of these narratives to be assailed by arguments which—to say nothing of their tone, which is certainly singular in a man of education, and shows no respect for the religious susceptibilities of other people—betray an entire lack of sympathy with the scientific spirit, and rather resemble the braggadocio of a Cockney sportsman, or the heroics of a Don Quixote.

It would be a sincere pleasure to me should your conscience as a man of science compel you to acknowledge publicly that, in writing the passages in question, you were the victim of dependence on mistaken “authorities.”

But if this is more than you can bring yourself to confess, I shall be content that through this “Open Letter” it will be made clear to others at least that in the chapter of your book under review you have been very far from giving the results of scientific work.

Every one to whom this is clear will be convinced of one thing. He may think as he will on the question whether a University should properly include a theological faculty. But he will be convinced that so long as members of other faculties require, so

notoriously as you do, to be corrected from the theological side in the interests of "objective truth," its presence cannot be dispensed with. Therefore, at the close of my letter, I remind you once again of the bonds of collegueship existing between us, and subscribe myself, honoured colleague,

Your respectful and obedient servant,

DR. FRIEDRICH LOOFS,

Professor of Church History.

APPENDIX II

PROFESSOR HAECKEL'S REJOINDER,
PUBLISHED IN THE *Zeitschrift für wissen-
schaftliche Kritik und Anti-kritik* (I JAHRGANG,
NO. 2) OF JANUARY 6, 1900, TOGETHER
WITH THE SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE BY
THE EDITOR OF THE *Zeitschrift*,
DR. ERICH BISCHOFF

DR. FRIEDRICH LOOFS, Professor of Church History in Halle, a/S., has published, in No. 45 of the *Christliche Welt*, an "Open Letter" addressed to me, in which my recent book, *The Riddle of the Universe*—especially the seventeenth chapter, on "Science and Christianity"—is subjected to sharp criticism. For a complete reply to this "Open Letter" I have neither time nor inclination; nor would anything of the kind lead to a mutual understanding, for our scientific standpoints are profoundly and fundamentally different. As a Christian theologian, Professor Loofs is still entangled in the naïve belief in miracles characteristic of the Middle Ages, and in particular for the conception of Christ he accepts a *supernatural* antecedent, the "overshadowing by the Holy Ghost." I, on the contrary, as an empirical student of nature, am compelled—like all natural scientists of the present day—to *reject all miracle*, and seek to explain every phenomenon by its natural

causes. Consequently, even as regards the conception of Christ, I must ask who the *father* was that brought about conception in the case of the "Virgin Mary."

The Roman Church early affirmed the dogma that Mary conceived and gave birth to Jesus without the co-operation of a male, and without violation of her virginity, while a section of modern Protestants (e.g. the "Evangelical Alliance") has also laid the greatest stress on this point. Modern philosophy has therefore been forced to fight this *superstition*. It can discuss so important a question only from the settled standpoint of the modern *physiology of procreation*, and is therefore *compelled* to search for the real father of Jesus. As his later stepfather, Joseph the carpenter, is excluded by the testimony of the canonical Gospels themselves, there remains as the solitary source of information the statement of Celsus the Platonist (in the second century, A.D.), which is confirmed by contemporary and earlier notices in the Talmud, especially by the *Sepher Toldoth* (not *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua*), belonging to the first century. According to Celsus the true father of Jesus was the Roman officer Josephus Pandera (or Pantheros), the lieutenant of a Calabrian legion which was then in Judaea (cf. p. 116 of my *Riddle, etc.*).

Professor Loofs summarily dismisses this, the *sole positive statement*, as an incredible "Jewish slander"—hardly a scientific refutation! Similarly, he considers it *unnecessary* to acquaint himself with the remarkable work of the learned and acute *English theologian Saladin* (Stewart Ross), "*Jehovas*

gesammelte Werke (Leipzig, Fleischer, 1896). [English title—*God and His Book*, etc.] As I myself build for the most part on this source, I must refer the reader to the book itself for further details.

ERNST HAECKEL.

Jena, *December 8*, 1899.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE BY THE EDITOR

BEFORE entering upon the controverted question which is raised in the explanation just given, and is in dispute between the two scholars named above, I must put my readers in possession of the chief points in Professor Loofs' "Open Letter." A peculiarly unlucky star has presided over the publication of this letter. Quite apart from the fact that the style of address which the writer has adopted, viz. a personal harangue with his opponent *à la* Lessing—interpersed with phrases like "Do not be horrified," and other small quips and jests, as for example that about "literary lines of descent," etc.—does not seem to me quite in place.

1. The organ he has selected for the publication of the "Letter," viz. a "family journal" like the *Christliche Welt*, is the most unsuitable that could be conceived for leading a scientific proof against an opponent. A journal which, when "compelled" to deal with a subject which is "all too human" must, consistently with its whole character, offer its humble apologies at "the table of the Christian family," a journal, too, which has sometimes fallen into gross confusion of ideas when dealing with such subjects, as I know to my cost,⁶⁹ is utterly unfit for perfectly frank scientific discussions, when what is wanted is not clever jesting, but serious debate.

2. It is not quite seemly, in a scientific polemic, that Professor Loofs should reproach the author for having made him "waste" five shillings in procuring a certain book, all because Professor Gerhard,⁶⁹ who is a specialist in Talmudic study, did not get the book for the University Library in Halle. It is unfitting, too, that Professor Loofs should waste seven lines on the harmless misprint 327, and other ten on the expression "the *Synodicon* of Pappus" (instead of the *Synodicon*, ed. Pappus), though in the same way we speak quite freely of "the Greek New Testament of Erasmus," and "the Psalterium Quintuplex of Le Fèvre d'Estaples," or "the Tholdoth Jeschua of Wagenseil," or "the General Encyclopaedia of Meyer," and yet no one thinks it necessary to make learned remarks on the significance of the preposition "of" as denoting the *editor*.

3. Furthermore, Professor Loofs' attempted proof that in the story from the *Synodicon* "there is not a word about the Gospels," is a failure. According to the *Synodicon*, all the writings whose canonicity was to be tested were laid on the ground at the altar, and after prayer had been offered, those writings which are now canonical were found lying on the altar, and the spurious underneath it. *All* the canonical writings are mentioned here; and therefore we must assume that out of the *Gospels* which were to be tested, there leaped up the *four* which we now possess, and out of the apostolic Epistles those which are now recognized as genuine. So that the Gospels are mentioned, *along with* other Biblical writings.

4. I intentionally say, "other *Biblical* writings." For the "remark" cited by Loofs from Jerome (*Praef. in librum Judith*) not only "certainly might," but *must*, at least as Jerome meant it, be interpreted in the sense "that the Nicene Council took to do with the fixing of the Canon." In the very same passage Jerome says that, while the "auctoritas" of the Book of Judith was considered "minus idonea ad roboranda illa quae in contentionem veniunt," still (he proceeds) he had included it in his translation, "*quia hunc librum Synodus Nicaena in numero sanctarum Scripturarum legitur computasse.*" How these words can mean "something quite different" from that the Nicene Council inserted the Book of Judith in the Canon, I do not understand. As to the number of the Gospels having been fixed at four, as is alleged, "so early as 185," one need only remind a Professor of Church History of the "Gospel of the Hebrews," to make him realize how audacious it is to assert that *only* four Gospels were "fixed" at this date. Even Jerome, in his *Praefatio in Evangelistas ad Damasum*, feels that he must give *reasons* why his "praefatiuncula pollicetur quattuor tantum Evangelia"; and in the *Catalogus scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum* he appeals not only to canonical books of the New Testament, but also to the "*Evangelium quoque, quod appellatur secundum Hebraeos et a me nuper translatus est, quo et Origenes saepe utitur.*" If therefore, even *after* the Nicene Council, the number of the Gospels as four was not yet so *universally* "fixed" as Loofs would make out from particular "remarks" in Irenaeus, etc., the Nicene Council

was *quite in a position* to deal also with the canonicity of the *Gospels*, and to endeavour to fix it.

5. I come now to the chief point in dispute between Haeckel and Loofs, the historical truth regarding the birth of Jesus. I may without presumption claim the right to pronounce an opinion on this subject, as well as on the views of the two disputants, for I know the Biblical, patristic, and Talmudic sources in the original, and, above all, with my honoured collaborateur, Professor Krauss, I am the only modern expert in the Jewish *Toldoth-Jeschu* literature, whether edited or unedited. Now, in my judgment, Professor Haeckel is wrong in thinking that the paternity of Joseph "is excluded by the testimony of the canonical Gospels themselves." If the miraculous be eliminated from Matthew, there remains the following: Mary and Joseph were betrothed, and as such enjoyed marital rights and duties. According to Jewish custom betrothal might take place by a simple declaration, or even simply by a carnal act (*Kidduschin*, 2a, 6a). Still, this method of betrothal, which was often revealed only by the advance of pregnancy, was frequently punished by the Rabbis with scourging (*ibid.* 12b), as they sanctioned intercourse only after the betrothal had received the religious benediction (*Kallah ad init.*). Now Joseph, according to Matthew's representation, is a "Dikaios" (*Zaddiq*, a strict observer of the law), who, in order to escape "Church discipline" for their informal betrothal and its consequences, prefers to separate secretly from his betrothed, but is restrained from doing so by the dream. Nor is there anything in Luke

(if we put aside the supernatural) to prevent our supposing that, after the annunciation by the angel, perhaps as a result of the impression it produced (i.e. between i. 38 and 39), intercourse which, as explained above, was perfectly legitimate, took place between Mary and her betrothed. Even on this "human" interpretation, abundant room is left for the action of the Holy Ghost, especially in relation to Mary's permanent virginity *of soul*, which is of such importance. Strange as this irregularity in Joseph's marriage may appear to Western habits of thought, Jewish enemies could find no fault with the birth of Jesus as a result of such intercourse. To declare Jesus' birth illegitimate, they would have to impute adultery to Mary, whom they consistently regard as either the wedded wife or, what is precisely equivalent, the betrothed of Joseph. This is done in the assertion of Simon ben Azzai (about 100 A.D.) reproduced in the Talmud (*J'vamoth*, iv. 13=fol. 49a), in which Simon appeals to a *Sepher Tholdoth* (Register of Births), which he professes to have seen in Jerusalem. "Simon ben Azzai said, I found in Jerusalem a *Sepher Tholdoth* in which was written, *That man (=Jesus) is the bastard of a married woman.*" Genealogical collections of documents of this kind were important for furnishing evidence of qualification for the priestly status, etc., and "were provided with all kinds of details more or less closely connected therewith" (cf. Laible, *Jesus Christus im Talmud*, p. 31). Herod I, probably to obliterate the traces of his humble birth and to break the ancestral pride of the Jews (Hamburger, *Real-Enc. f. Bib. u. Talm.*,

ii. 294), is said to have destroyed all such registers existing in his time (Eusebius, *H.E.* 1, 7, 5 ; cf. Talmud, P'sachim, 62*b*). Now, as Herod died in 44 A.D., Ben Azzai evidently means to represent the *Sepher Tholdoth* found by him as one which had escaped this piece of vandalism on Herod's part, and therefore as one dating from the Herodian epoch, i.e. completed soon after Jesus' birth, and thus a contemporary document. The passage cited is, in any case, one of the earliest statements in the Talmud about Jesus, for it stands in the Mischnah ; while the later details (especially the one on which the accusation of Celsus is based, viz. " Ben Stada " = Ben Stratiota = Soldier's son ; cf. G. Röscher, *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1873, pp. 77-155) date only from the time of Akiba, i.e. about the middle of the second century A.D. (cf. Laible, p. 89).

It is the brief notice in the above-mentioned Talmudic *Sepher Tholdoth*—a parallel to the words of the Jews in chap. ii. of the Gospel of Nicodemus, " Thou wast begotten in sin " (Tischendorf, *Ev. apocr.*, ed. ii. 291)—which has expanded *viâ* " Ben Stada " and " Ben Pandira " in the Talmud into the assertion of Celsus that the centurion, Joseph Pandera, was the father of Jesus ; and, as an exchange of letters has convinced me, it is this same *Sepher Tholdoth* which Professor Haeckel had in his mind when he wrote the ambiguous sentence regarding the birth of Jesus, that the statement of an apocryphal Gospel is confirmed by the *Sepher Tholdoth Jeschua*, and that " this author " relates that the centurion, Joseph Pandera, seduced Miriam, etc.

Considering the all but absolute incapacity of the Talmudists for dealing with history, Haeckel's position in regarding such a piece of Talmudic gossip as a "historical statement," nay, as the only historical detail we have about Jesus' real parentage (because he believes that in the Gospels Joseph is represented merely as Jesus' "step-father"), is in my opinion untenable. On the other hand, the fact that he should call a *Sepher Tholdoth*, in which Jesus (in Hebrew, Jeschua) is supposed to be mentioned, *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua*, is quite pardonable in a non-expert. But it is all the greater fault in Loofs, who here poses as an *expert* answering a dilettante, because he thinks that Haeckel is alluding to one of the late Jewish *Tholdoth Jeschu* books (Loofs means the one edited, in Latin, by Wagenseil, in his *Tela ignea Satanae*, Altdorf, 1681, and translated into German and refuted by Eisenmenger in his *Entdecktes Judentum*, Frankfort a. M., 1700, i. 105-288) —I say, it is all the greater fault in Loofs, who is so hard on misprints, to write "*S. Tholdoth Jeschua*" when *all* versions of the pamphlet, for the very reason that they mean to slander Jesus, have "*S. Tholdoth Jeschu*." The *only* book which is entitled "*Sepher Tholdoth Jeschua*," and which neither of them knows, is Lichtenstein's polemic, written in Hebrew, *against* the *Tholdoth Jeschu*, especially against the version edited by Wagenseil (Leipzig, about 1885). Still more inaccurate is Loofs' expressly confident assertion that "none but a stubborn, narrow-minded Jew could resist the conclusion, long ago proved, that the *Sepher Tholdoth Jeschua* is a slanderous Jewish writing of the

thirteenth century." Now, I can trace my Christian ancestry back to near 1600, and no one has yet called me "narrow-minded." Nevertheless, founding on more exhaustive study and a greater wealth of material than Loofs and his authorities, I maintain that traces of the *Tholdoth Jeschu* can be proved to have existed as early as about 800 A.D., and that some of the extant versions go back to the eleventh or twelfth century. The treatise of Professor Krauss on the whole *Tholdoth* literature, which may be expected next year, will prove, indeed, that certain elements reach much further back. Nay more, inasmuch as the *Tholdoth Jeschu* contain many Talmudic statements about Jesus which the State-censor has struck out of editions of the Talmud since the seventeenth century, one might say *cum grano salis* that they may be employed to confirm the statements which Celsus has drawn from the Talmudists. But when Loofs, because perhaps one version of the *Tholdoth* belongs to the thirteenth century, says that the "Sepher Tholdoth" dates from that period, one might just as well say that it dates from 1862 or 1899; for down to our own day Russian and other Jews pass their leisure hours in the composition of similar elegant literature.

From the scientific point of view, therefore, Professor Loofs' criticism, to whatever praiseworthy motives it is to be attributed, does not seem to me of such a kind as to satisfy readers more critical than those of the *Christliche Welt*. In the above pages I too, no less than the two disputants, may have fallen into errors; I shall gladly be informed of

them, and I beg both gentlemen and any other who is interested, to point them out—only with proofs. In any case, no one will be able justly to charge me with “the braggadocio of a Cockney sportsman,” or “the heroics of a Don Quixote.”

DR. ERICH BISCHOFF.

Leipzig.

NOTES

1. [By § 166 of the German Criminal Code it is declared a punishable offence to ridicule the customs or methods (and this includes doctrines) of any religious body recognized by the State.—Translator.]

2. It is given in Appendix I.

3. Cf. Appendix II.

4. Cf. Appendix II.

5. In order not to miss any emendations in a new edition, when proceeding to correct the first edition of this pamphlet I ordered a new copy. On February 10 I received a copy on which was printed "New and unaltered edition, completing 6th and 7th thousand."

6. Since January it has twice been brought to my notice that "Saladin" (cf. Section II.) is read and hawked about by (non-theological) students, as an authority recommended by Haeckel.

7. "It is very wrong of us poor ignorant laymen not to believe all that our pastors and masters tell us" (p. 36). "To a layman like myself, who has not been taken into the literary confidence of the Trinity" (p. 39).

8. On p. 32 he faithfully reproduces the misprint (?) of the English original (p. 30), כה קול instead of בת קול, and the Hebrew alphabet on p. 53 shows eight of its twenty-two letters misprinted. He quotes the citation from the Croesus-oracle (p. 24) with the misprints (?) of the original (p. 22) in the following form, Χροισος' Αλυν διαθας μεγαλην αρχην διαλυσει.

9. "Metode," instead of "Methode" (p. 15), and "ortodox" instead of "orthodox" (p. 122); cf. also "Petrus kommt Thimotheum zu Hülfe" (p. 2).

10. This *Nomen proprium* is used more frequently in the German than in the original. The translation in general is a good deal more vulgar than the English book. Cf. e.g. "It was so considerate of Jehovah" (Orig. p. 41), with the German rendering, "Es war so zuvorkommend von Papa Jehova" (p. 43).

11. Here too the translation [which has *Geischt*] is coarser. In the original a similar impression is created mainly by the fact that the Biblical designation "[holy] Ghost" is used, not that

which is more adapted to modern speech, "Holy Spirit." For in ordinary life "Ghost" is also used in the sense of "Gespenst."

12. As such, in distinction from those which are "*now* considered canonical by Jews and Christians," Saladin names the Books of Esther and Ruth! He claims to have enjoyed great familiarity with the Bible as a child, but not much of it has remained with the man. It is certainly true that originally, among both Jews and Christians, differences of opinion prevailed as to the canonicity of the Book of Esther. But that is more than 1,500 years from "*now*." "Ruth" may have escaped the notice of Saladin's authority, because in the time of Jesus the Jews regarded it as forming *one* book with the Book of Judges.

13. The latter group includes, along with the "Apocryphal Books, which are Lost," the so-called Pseudepigrapha. One would need many pages fully to exemplify the ignorance which Saladin has displayed in enumerating these "lost" books. He has evidently copied a list which belongs to a time prior to the scientific work and the literary discoveries of the nineteenth century.

14. Saladin, of course, is here speaking of the "Ark of the Covenant," the ancient shrine of Israel, which—originally perhaps a receptacle of sacred stones, or of a sacred stone (cf. Benzinger, *Hebräische Archäologie*, Freiburg, 1894, p. 368 f.)—served later as a place of safe-keeping for the stone Tables of the Law (of which even Saladin knows, p. 8), which Moses was thought to have received from God on Sinai. According to a later Jewish tradition which is not universal, but which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews follows (ix. 4), it also contained a pot of manna and Aaron's rod. That the "Book of the Law" was also deposited in the Ark, Saladin seems to take merely as a deduction from Deut. xxxi. 26: "Take the book of the law, and put it into the side [i.e. inside, as Saladin explains] of the Ark of the Covenant"; and this deduction is wrong, for the Hebrew text says "Put it *to* the side of the Ark," i.e. "beside the Ark." Dillmann (on Deut. xxxi. 26) points out that libraries can be proved to have been kept in shrines by the classical nations also. Still, there may be an echo of a kindred Jewish tradition in Saladin's words, unknown to himself. For my honoured colleague Kautzsch draws my attention to the fact that in the Midrasch Debarim rabba, Parasche ix. (on Deut. xxxi. 14), R. Janai says: "He (Moses) wrote thirteen Torah-rolls,

twelve for the tribes, and one he put in the Ark, so that if any one sought to falsify the text, they should fetch it out of the Ark [to compare it]" (see Wünsche, *Biblioth. rabbin.* 19th Pt. p. 101). Even Saladin might admit that *this* "method of publication" was distinctly useful.

15. "There was nothing in the Ark save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb" (1 Kings viii. 9). Of course! See the preceding note.

16. None of Saladin's readers would guess that we stand on sure historical ground as to this finding of the "Book of the Law"—it was the original form of our Deuteronomy which then (623) came to light. For Saladin employs here the same mocking seriousness as in speaking of Jehovah's writing books throughout eternity. What present-day science knows about the history of the people of Israel is just as unfamiliar to this "acute English theologian" as the Pentateuchal criticism which took its rise in the nineteenth century.

17. The passage is to be found in the translation of the "Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament," edited by Professor Kautzsch (Freiburg, 1899), vol. ii. p. 399 ff. [See, in English, 2 Esdras xiv. 21, 42-44.]

18. Cf. with the above Wellhausen, in Bleek's *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 6th Aufl. p. 580 ff.; Stade, *Hebr. Grammatik*, i. 26 ff.; Kautzsch, *Hebr. Grammatik*, 25th Aufl. p. 22 f.; Benzinger, *Hebr. Archäologie*, p. 286 ff.

19. Literally: "and when one rose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." On the rendering of the indefinite personal subject by the third person plural, see Kautzsch, *Hebr. Grammatik*, 25th Aufl. p. 446b.

20. These statistical calculations are not easily intelligible. Still, on the assumption (erroneous, it is true) that every Hebrew entered on a *monogamic* marriage only *once*, they are correct; for in that case the number of firstborn in a nation is equal to the number of mothers. Recent scientific theology is also familiar with these difficulties (cf. Dillmann's *Commentary on Numbers*, 2nd Aufl., 1886, p. 5 ff., and on iii. 43, p. 20 f.). Dillmann rightly rejects the expedient of saving the accuracy of the number of the firstborn (22,273) by reference to polygamy, or by more artificial constructions. Polygamy did not prevail in Israel to such an extent as to make credible the low number of the firstborn, which is too small relatively to the total number of the people. But the difficulty may be solved simply by supposing that the

narrator wished to give numerical expression to the thought which is put into words in Numbers iii. 11-13, that God would regard the Levites, who were consecrated to Him, as the first-born who would properly have fallen to Him—to the 22,273 firstborn there correspond the 22,000 (iii. 39) or 23,000 (xxvi. 62) Levites. "The narrator can hardly have been conscious of the real difficulty thus introduced into his narrative" (Dillmann, *op. cit.* p. 20). Saladin's criticism stands upon the same level as that of the older rationalists, who, as yet unfamiliar with historical criticism, accepted from orthodoxy the accuracy of the statements which they criticized.

21. The italics are mine.

22. Now italicized by me.

23. Dr. Bischoff may be charged with similar disingenuousness. For his remark (p. 79), "I come now to the chief point in dispute between Haeckel and Loofs, the historical truth regarding the birth of Jesus," although put in such a way that another sense is possible, can only be understood by the reader—after Haeckel's rejoinder, and as express reference is not made to my position—in the sense which Haeckel's rejoinder gives it.

24. Now for the first time italicized by me.

25. It is a theory widespread in scientific theology that these genealogies, which are meant to prove the Davidic descent of Jesus, are older than the birth-stories in Matthew i. and Luke ii., since they prove kinship with David, not for Mary, but for Joseph—and that it was only later that their concluding, or initial, link (Matt. i. 16; Luke iii. 23) was brought into conformity with the birth-story. That I reckon with this theory in what I have said, I must expressly observe *here*; for the readers of the *Real-Encyklopädie* it was self-evident.

26. Constantine initiated the movement which culminated in the rise of the State Church in the end of the fourth century. In his time Christianity was no more than a specially favoured *religio licita*. The rights of paganism were fully recognized.

27. *Omnia indiscreta apud nos praeter uxores*. Apol. 39.

28. Euseb., *H.E.*, 8, 1, 7 ff.

29. The number 318 is legendary. The authoritative tradition says "about 300": the list of signatures preserved is incomplete. (Cf. *Patrum Nicaenorum Nomina*, ed. Gelzer, Hilgenfeld, Cuntz, Leipzig, 1898.)

30. *Gesch. des neutestamentlichen Kanon*, p. 207.

31. Cf. e.g. Jülicher, *Einleitung*, p. 302.

32. *Scriptum est in evangelio quodam, quod dicitur secundum Hebraeos, si tamen placet alicui suscipere illud non ad auctoritatem, sed ad manifestationem propositae quaestionis* (in Matt. xix. 19, *Comment.*, tom. xv. 14, ed. de la Rue, iii. 671, note).

33. Cf. Handmann, *Das Hebräerevangelium*, Leipzig, 1888, p. 26 ff. Here—pp. 45–62, especially 60–62—the reader will also find an exhaustive treatment of the position (touched on by Dr. Bischoff) which the vain Jerome took about the Gospel of the Hebrews. In all probability he gave out that Gospel, deliberately and against his own better knowledge, as a Hebrew form of Matthew.

34. Tom. i. in Luc., ed. de la Rue, iii. 933—Lommatzsch, v. 86 f.

35. *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur*, Freiburg, 1895, p. 11. Similarly Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur*, i., 1897, p. 480.

36. Luther himself perceived that the Epistle to the Hebrews makes no claim whatever to be written by Paul.

37. I pass by everything that is merely uncertain, out of perspective, or partisan in tone. Only one remark would I make by way of annotation. The statement on p. 113 that Luther “rejected as folly the great discovery of Copernicus” is not inaccurate as regards the fact. But Haeckel does not tell us that here he is quoting merely from a conversation at Luther’s table, in which perhaps not even the name “of the new astrologer,” “of whom they were speaking,” was mentioned (cf. *Luthers Werke*, Erl. Ausg., 62, 319; and Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, ii. 526). Luther appears never to have heard any more about Copernicus than he learned from this table-talk. So that he really could not have got any idea of the “great discovery” of Copernicus.

38. *ὁὶς Φαρισαίων*. “According to this, not only the father, but also earlier ancestors of Paul, belonged to the sect of the Pharisees” (Wendt—a colleague of Haeckel’s at Jena—in *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 1899, p. 362). There is working in Haeckel’s blunder a dim inkling of the fact that Paul’s father possessed the Roman citizenship (cf. Acts xxii. 28).

39. According to a communication by his son-in-law to the *Allgem. Missionszeitschrift*, xxvi. p. 164, note.

40. Cf. *Allgem. Missionszeitschrift*, xxi. p. 566.

41. Cf. e.g. the article on “Celibacy,” by Emil Friedberg, in Hauck’s *Real-Encyclopädie* (iv. 205 ff.).

42. In which, however, Haeckel (in his 19th chapter) finds much to object to.

43. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, 6th Aufl.; Würzburg, 1888, § 1502.

44. Cf. Simar, *Lehrbuch der [katholischen] Dogmatik*, 4th edition, Freiburg, 1899, i. 493; Wetzer and Welte, *Kirchenlexikon oder Encyclopädie der katholischen Theologie*, 2nd edition, article "Conception" (iv. 456-74).

45. *Polemik*, 6th Aufl. p. 404. Cf. on the other side, A. Jäger, *Kaiser Joseph II und Leopold II*; Vienna, 1869, p. 151.

46. The book is absolutely worthless; and for that reason every shilling spent upon it is "wasted." Dr. Bischoff (cf. his remark, p. 77) seems not to know the book, or does not understand the language of indignant satire. In any case it would have been more ingenuous to inform his readers *which* book I had criticized so severely.

47. ἐξ ἀμαρτίας εἰ γεγεννημένος: Tischendorf, *Ev. apocr.* 291. The reading of Text A (*ibid.* 224) ἐκ πορνείας γεγέννησθαι can only refer to illicit intercourse on the part of *Joseph* with Mary, for the defence offered by the other Jews present is given here too in the statement, οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἐμνηστεύσατο ὁ Ἰωσήφ τὴν Μαρίαν (p. 225).

48. The form which I gave in my "Open Letter," *Sepher Toldoth Jeschua*, Dr. Bischoff has mistakenly challenged as a "misprint." As (cf. Rösch, *op. cit.*) the edition of the *Tol'doth* by J. J. Huldreich (known to me from the *Theol. Stud. u. Kr.* 1873, p. 83, etc., though not before me at the time) uses not the abusive form *Jeschu* (which Eisenmenger [i. 105] adopts in the passage I cited), but the ordinary form *Jeschua*, to correct Haeckel's method of citation on such a point would have been as trivial as to dispute regarding the proper transcription of *Tol'doth*. Accordingly I simply kept Haeckel's title, and when citing it for the first time used marks of quotation. Even in an "expert" this would not have been blameworthy, much less in a Church historian, who seldom has occasion to pursue his Hebrew studies further, as Dr. Bischoff, himself a former instructor in religion, might have known. For my part, I have no hesitation in admitting that the knowledge of Hebrew and Syriac which I gained at the feet of Lagarde has only *grown less* in the twenty years which have elapsed since then. But it is still sufficient to enable me to check dilettantes like Saladin and Haeckel.

49. Vide Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judentum*, i. 205 ff.

50. So far as I know, this literature has been very little worked at. In Graetz's voluminous *History of the Jews* I have found nothing on the subject, perhaps in consequence of insufficient search. Abraham Geiger's [*Die Stellung des Judentums zum Christentum im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert. Offenes Sendschreiben an den Evangelischen Ober-Kirchenrat*, Breslau, 1871, p. 11 f.] general remark that Jewish literature, up to the twelfth century, passed over in silence wellnigh all relations to Christianity and Islam, and that it was only in the twelfth century that certain *isolated* books were composed, intended to maintain the truth of Judaism against Christianity, and to expose the weaknesses supposed to be perceptible in the hostile faith—especially, as Geiger then says, though certainly without mentioning the literature, that not till the thirteenth century was the situation essentially changed—might seem to favour the theory, that this poisonous literature took its rise only after the time of persecution in the thirteenth century.

51. Dr. Bischoff himself has said, in regard to the criticism of the person of Jesus in which the Jews, who were repelled by "the medieval picture of Christ," used to indulge: "*Pseudo-criticism of this kind, in favour even with Christians, ought to admonish us more and more to bring the person of Jesus Christ away down from the heights of metaphysics into the depths of the heart*" (*Ein jüdisch-deutsches Leben Jesu*, Vorrede, p. 8). My "triumphant confidence" rested on the fact that I saw Haeckel treading in the footsteps of the "Christians," of whom Dr. Bischoff is here thinking.

52. I have before me both the edition of the *Mischnah* by W. H. Lowe, Cambridge, 1883 (cf. here for this passage, p. 71b, line 9 f.), and that by Jost, Berlin, 1832-4 (cf. here iii. p. 7b, ff.). I learn from Herr Goldschmidt that not only the uncensored *editio princeps* of the *Talmud*, but all the editions to which he has access, have the same reading.

53. In this translation I have kept mainly to the German rendering, which, in Hebrew letters, is given in Jost's edition. Another German translation is given by Joh. Jac. Rabe, *Mischnah*, iii., Onolzbach, 1761, p. 22; one in French the reader will find in M. Schwab, *Le Talmud de Jérusalem*, vii., Paris, 1885, p. 72 f.

54. In Hebrew: אָמַר שְׁמֵעוּ בּוֹ עֲזָאִי מְצֵאתִי מִגִּלַּת יוֹחֵסִין
בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם וְכָתוּב בָּהּ אִישׁ פְּלוֹנִי מְמֹזֵר מֵאַשְׁתֵּי אִישׁ;

55. *Athenaeum für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Leben*, February, 1839, pp. 15-30. Haeckel knows absolutely nothing of the numerous discussions that have taken place regarding the origin of the name Pandera. What he himself says on the point (p. 117), when he brings the name into connexion with "Pandora," is an absurdity for which he is not altogether responsible, for it is derived—of course indirectly—in part from J. J. Huldreich (cf. *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1873, p. 88 f.).

56. Luke iv. 22, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

57. John i. 46, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." vi. 42, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?"

58. It cannot be traced back, even in its simplest form, beyond about the year 130; and that it is much older is rendered improbable by the fact that no apologetic refutation of any such charge is to be found anywhere in the New Testament. It is true the assertion has been made that it was calumnies of this kind which decided the first and third Evangelists to communicate to a wider circle the secret of the Virgin-Birth, which had long before been known to the initiated. But the apologetic aim of this hypothesis is more obvious, in my opinion, than its tenability. To my mind, and that of many others, it appears much more probable that the Jewish "statements" were comments upon the Christian narrative of the Virgin-Birth (so, too, D. F. Strauss in the Essay cited above, on p. 52). Cf. note 55.

59. Cf. Mosheim, *Origines . . . wider Celsus*, 1745, p. 81 ff.

60. That Matthew i. 25—"and (Joseph) knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son"—makes it impossible to accept this tradition, is an assertion of Haeckel's (Eng. Trans. p. 116, and Rejoinder, p. 49, though the passage is not cited), which only proves that he simply does not understand the methods of historical research. Matthew i. 25 is an integral part of the second tradition; accordingly it is an error in method to make use of this verse, when the entire document from which it is taken is regarded as unauthentic. And Jesus' self-designation as "Son of God" can only be made an argument against the first tradition, as is done by Haeckel (*op. cit.*), by one who is completely ignorant of the (pre-Christian) Jewish history of the conception "Son of God." Further, Dr. Bischoff is guilty of the same error in method as Haeckel, when, in his rationalizing explanation of the birth-story (p. 52), he puts the supernatural

element aside, yet afterwards employs as historical the details of the narrative. Still, according to an explanation which he has published in the *Allgem. luther. Kirchenzeitung* (1900, col. 115), it was only *διαλεκτικῶς* that he suggested this rationalizing elimination of the Virgin-Birth.

61. I can quite well understand that, where living Christian faith exists, pious feeling will make this decision difficult; and since even historical grounds have been advanced to defend the second tradition against the charge of being too late (cf. note 58), I cannot impute it to any one as a deficiency in scientific conscience should he personally feel that science does not prevent his following the second tradition. But a year or two ago I sought to press upon the notice of all those who take this view the following consideration: "*No well-informed and at the same time honest and conscientious theologian can deny that he who asserts these things as indisputable facts affirms what is open to grave doubts. . . . Any one who understands anything about historical criticism must concede that the Virgin-Birth [and the ascension on the fortieth day] belong to the least credible of New Testament traditions*" (*American Journal of Theology*, July, 1899, p. 443).

62. H. Graetz, in his *History of the Jews*, iii. 2nd. ed. p. 222, says of Jesus, without alluding *even by a single word* to the slanders of his co-religionists: "Jesus, of Nazareth, a small town of Lower Galilee, was the firstborn son of an otherwise unknown carpenter Joseph, by his wife Miriam or Mary."

63. Cf. the bibliography given in Strack's preface to Laible, *Jesus Christus im Talmud*, Berlin, 1891. It contains the names of seventeen Christian theologians. And yet it takes no account of the numerous occasional discussions of the subject in the more extended Church histories in literature concerned with the Life of Jesus, in encyclopaedias, and historical monographs.

64. In the Gospel the word is "angel."

65. I suppose the book referred to is that cited by Haeckel, p. 98, *Forms of Faith*, by Adalbert Svoboda (born 1828), 2 vols., Leipzig, 1896-7.

66. Cf. on Haeckel as a philosopher, the excellent papers by Professor Troeltsch in the *Christliche Welt* for February 15 and 22, 1900. [Cf. the essay by Prof. Paulsen mentioned in the Author's Preface.—Translator.]

67. Were Professor Haeckel to publish an explanation in something of the following style—"Professor Loofs has once

more, and on this occasion in the most immoderate fashion, criticized *one* chapter of my *Riddle of the Universe*, and has had the *naïveté* to suggest that for the insults which he considers it Christian to heap upon my head, I should seek satisfaction in the law-courts. I can only say that I have no taste for any such termination to a scientific controversy. Our controversy must remain undecided, for decision is impossible, since the fundamental presumptions and convictions of a theologian who, as he himself says, 'is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ and of its supernaturalism,' must of course be different from those of an empirical naturalist,"—I should regard such an expedient as utterly mean. I protest beforehand against his playing hide-and-seek in this way.

68. [By § 185 of the German Criminal Code insults are declared punishable, though it is distinctly stated that proof of their truth suffices to remove the criminality of the insulting words. § 193 declares that such "insults" as keep within the limits prescribed by the defence of legitimate interests, are to go free.—Translator.]

69. Two notes, dealing with mere personal explanations, have been omitted at this point.







